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planted, disappear before the advance of European vegetables. This is as yet not a great change, because there are very few of these gardens, and it is far beyond present resources to construct irrigation furrows.

The balance is also upset by other tendencies. Agriculture is still a vital interest, but others are beginning to compete with it, and the various cultural devices by which interests were massed behind the various stages of agriculture are no longer as effective as formerly. Mobilization of energies by the seasonal calendar and their concentration at the strategic points of time and place are only partially effective. The unfolding of nature, the increasing signs of the coming spring, the more and more auspicious banking up of the thunder-clouds used to be like the culmination of intensive propaganda playing upon the emotions of the people. As the first rains fell and the scent of the veld rose to men's nostrils, they seemed to liberate internal secretions which drove men to action; and the example of the first workers in the fields made the impulse irresistible. But to-day, though much of this is in evidence and one still sees an impulsive restlessness canalized into productive activity, the reactions are, according to Native accounts, much weaker. Neither internal secretions, if such there are, nor suggestion in a tense situation have their old overpowering effect.

Translation of the impulses aroused into useful action is to some extent inhibited by enervating listlessness, at least among a proportion of the people. They are people puzzled by the changes around them or caught in the vicious circle of malnutrition and weakened incentives. They seek solutions in smaller exertions, lotus-like inactivity, and excessive beer-drinking; and in the hierarchy of ideals, these values are beginning to become unduly prominent. It would be disastrous if they created a cultural pattern, as the tendency suggests, in which agricultural work is mere drudgery and people concentrate upon easy crops, thus over-simplifying a wholesome simplicity in food and, as a cumulative result, not fulfilling, but draining the joys of life. Even to-day, weakened by unbalanced nutrition, many more people succumb to tuberculosis, bilharzia, tape-worm, even dysentery and malaria; as disease spreads and shakes the sense of security, sorcery and witchcraft become more common interpretations, and men must rely upon magic to restore their confidence. It is in agricultural practices that some of the greatest changes have occurred in the society. But, as will be seen, the changes are not of a simple nature.

These are the tendencies; but we must remember that the foundations of the society are deeply laid and the tensions are evident only in the upper superstructure. The people have a remarkable capacity for making adjustments, at least when no profound social arrangements are affected. They have adopted new crops, changed from hoe to plough cultivation, and adjusted themselves from unlimited to limited land. Unfortunately, they do not as yet have faith in manure. They have seen, they say, that manure raises an excess of weeds and that for *njugo* beans it is useless, even dangerous. One cannot appeal to the value of medicine, because only witches 'doctor' their fields, not indeed to fertilize them, but to steal the crops of their neighbours. Garden magic is never

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as are also any rights of ownership he may have. A child, who has been given a piece of land of his own to cultivate, will dispose of its produce as he pleases, and he may sell it for clothes or allow it to be used by the household. If he has been given fowls and the father wishes to kill one, he will mention it to the child and promise him another. Among parents one does not find the competitive jealousies that are apt to arise between European mothers about the relative size, weight, or health of their children, and there is little or no comparison of babies or boasting of their ability or cleverness. But a very precocious child is not liked; people may suspect that he is being taught to be a witch; and 'he outwits you obliquely [by way of witchcraft]'. Frightening of children by adults is of common occurrence. Not only are children told when naughty that a Shangana-Tonga or European will come and catch them or that a big elephant stalks about the village at night killing small children who will not go to bed, but mothers take pleasure in frightening them even when they are not naughty. Often a mother would try to force her child to come near us when she saw it was afraid or would tell it that we were about to carry it away in our suitcase. When it ran away crying, she would laugh with great merriment. If a small child refuses to greet a relative in the correct manner, his mother might take a knife and threaten to cut him or take hold of a pot and threaten to cook him unless he obeys. But fear of bogies is not excessive and fear is certainly not the only or most effective means of control.

Children learn the tasks required of adults simply by doing them. They are anxious to imitate their elders, and there is never any compulsory element in the teaching of these skills. Moreover, in their education they have this advantage, that it is not carried on in an institution divorced from everyday adult activities. The child feels that he is an essential part of society; all he does is a direct contribution to the domestic economy. If a small girl of five accompanies her mother to the fountain and returns solemnly carrying a diminutive calabash of water on her head, she feels she is doing important work, for her contribution will be used with that of her mother. 'The stick even of a child helps the adult across' and, in fact, a girl of six is able to fill quite a large pot of water for a busy mother by going to and fro with small quantities at a time from the fountain. One night, while sitting in a hut, we watched a girl of seven learning to cook. Fermented porridge was needed for the baby and this the girl set out to make in a small pot in the presence of her mother and several other girls somewhat older than herself who happened to be there. When the water boiled, she put in some ground grain, twirling the porridge twirler between the palms as she had seen her mother do. She took the comments and criticisms of the company with good grace, even when they smiled at her awkwardness. Meanwhile, her mother mentioned to us how useful it would be to have some one who could cook the evening meal on days when she came home late or tired from fetching wood. To a helpful toddler, its mother might say, 'Thank you, my lady' (*Ahee Khoba ya ga*), praising her by implying that she has already reached the maturity and usefulness of a mature young woman; or she may quote the maxim, 'Bearing children is not the same as gathering

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morning assaulted him, but was worsted; the offender then reported his wound at the capital. A *leharula* was sent to collect the blood fine from the district head, but, not finding him, left a message summoning him to the *khɔrɔ*. There the case was discussed with only initiates of the *gomana* present. The men could not decide upon their course of action. They said, 'Let no one be angry. The district head did right, but we cannot carry out the law of the "school" (the man who reveals the *digɔma* secrets must die). We cannot even impose a fine; no one knows what the fine should be. Let the matter rest.'

Khashani, working on a European farm, called his wife, whose baby was ill, to come to him. The baby died and Khashani, seeing 'medicine' on the fireplace, suspected and severely beat his sister's daughter as well as his sister. The case came to the *khɔrɔ* of the queen, which pointed out that if, as Khashani thought, his sister was a witch, he also probably was one. This did not satisfy Khashani, but his sister demanded back her cattle, and the *khɔrɔ*, attempting to isolate the struggle, said, 'We are discussing the "blood". You, Khashani, must pay your sister one head of cattle.' Khashani replied, 'That I agree to do. I shall even drive away my wife, so that I can return my sister's cattle.' The *khɔrɔ* was not much perturbed, since it thought that Khashani's threat was either bluff or the raving of a madman.

In the last case it was the victim, not the queen, who was awarded the head of cattle. The argument sometimes used by Lovedu men against such an award is better known in other tribes: it is that, if the victim is benefited, all he need do to become rich is to provoke others to fight him. And the theory held by those advancing this argument is that to spill blood is 'to break the queen's calabash', and therefore 'blood' cases must be submitted to the *khɔrɔ*. This is the view gaining ground, so that *maharula*, going to collect the blood fine, become messengers summoning the parties to the queen's *khɔrɔ*, without, however, ignoring the position of the district heads. The whole procedure is in a state of flux, but we can see in outline how the blood feud has gradually receded as the kin groups become submerged by the district organization and how, as a consequence, the procedure of reconciliation gained so firm a hold that it maintains its stand against the forces making for centralization.

Not long ago the procedure appropriate to cases of witchcraft and sorcery was the ordeal (*mureu*); and though the *mureu* has given way in Lovedu to smelling out by the diviner (*mugɔme*), it can still be seen further east among the Phalaborwa. The test takes various forms; drinking poison, usually an extract of *zavazava* (*Datura stramonium*), licking a medicated stick or a heated hoe, removing a stone from boiling water, floating the kernels of *muɬuzi* (*Oncoba spinosa*) in water and observing whether they separate or come together, sometimes accompanied by an oath or followed by the washing of hands or the squirting of water (*hu phasa*). All these are well-known in the lowveld, though the Lovedu used only or chiefly the first; but on the highveld, where witchcraft and sorcery are treated as private matters, there is no legal but only a magical method of dealing with them: the evil is sent back by a doctor privately employed by the victim. The Lovedu no longer rely upon the *mureu*,

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695 683 754 because it involves too great publicity and danger of European intervention, though they say, perhaps by way of rationalization, that the doctor of the ordeal could manipulate the test. As this procedure is merely of theoretical interest, we need refer only to its salient features.

The victim or his relative privately consulted a bone-throwing doctor, whose verdict he had confirmed by perhaps two or more other doctors before he or an intermediary on his behalf made a public accusation. The ordeal or test took place at the capital and was public. Lineal relatives of accuser and accused or, according to some, two strong men chosen by them, were given an intoxicating drink by the official 'doctor of the ordeal', the spectators watching to ensure that equal quantities were administered. Those who had drunk were put in the sun and he who began moving about or became dizzy, drunken, or incoherent was in the wrong. The witch was usually executed at once, at the orders of the queen, being strangled at the river; but if she was a woman, one of the executioners first had sexual intercourse with her; and the body, tied to a weight, was sunk into the water to be eaten by animals. But the witch was sometimes delivered to the victim to undo his evil work (*hu mu ɮulla*), and if the illness left the victim the witch was released. Sometimes, also, suspected witches were beaten, tied up (nowadays, as we have seen, handcuffed and submitted to ridicule and abuse), and left without food or tortured with velvet stinging-beans until they confessed; this was sometimes done privately, and it was possible also to kill them without the public ordeal, the killing being reported to the queen; but usually they were merely banished.

683 754 The property of a witch who was killed was not all confiscated, but *baza*, consisting chiefly of his cattle, was taken by the queen for division between herself and her nobles. No one else could appropriate *baza*; even the village head, if he did so, was regarded as a thief. The witch's gardens reverted to the district head, the crops were taken, not by the queen, because she could not eat the 'dirt of the witch', but by the messengers of the queen, for they were so busy in her service that they could hardly cultivate their fields. Residents in the district surreptitiously during the night took the witch's crops, but it was regarded as disgraceful to do so openly during the day. The wife of a witch was taken by a classificatory brother, and his children were adopted by the queen, who received *munywalo* when she married the girls to her nobles (in more recent times, to commoners, because the girls often deserted). In the days of the kings, all the relatives, or, as some say, only those on the mother's side—the mother's uterine brothers and sisters especially—were killed. The queens had only a uterine brother or sister killed if they failed to leave the country. The witch, unlike a murderer, could not find sanctuary in the forest of Ɗaja; and only a witch's, not a murderer's, property was *baza*—confiscable property.

787 695 [177] Since the beginning of this century submission of issues to ordeal has been replaced by their submission to the smelling-out diviner (*mugɔme*). The institution of the *mugɔme* has been borrowed from the Shangana-Tonga and its whole complicated legal procedure is still in a state of flux, adjustments being constantly made especially to avoid European intervention.

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intervention. The procedure involves, first, private consultations of a doctor, followed by an accusation directly or through an intermediary, a wager by the parties, publicly made often in the *khɔrɔ*, then a journey in the company of the 'ears' (official witness) of the chief to a distant smeller-out, the actual smelling out, at which the victor may be given a buck's horn to blow on his way home, and, finally the report to chief or district head and the adjudication of the *khɔrɔ*. We are here concerned only with the legal aspects, but we must at the outset remark that the procedure, primarily used in witchcraft cases, is relied upon whenever there are evidential difficulties and, paradoxically, it has rendered theft, adultery, and other wrongs, not less, but more amenable to some form of *khɔrɔ* control. Publicity and centralized control in the phenomenal, periodical *mureu* proceedings at the capital in the old days guaranteed their effectiveness, but men could privately execute self-confessed witches. To-day, amid conflicting tendencies, *mugɔme* proceedings are less public and hardly the prerogative of the queen. Witchcraft is not conceived necessarily to strike at the whole society; it is often dealt with privately; and even, after resort to the *mugɔme*, agreement by the parties in the district courts may end the matter.

The *mugɔme* procedure lends itself to fixing responsibility when a whole district feels threatened, just as in the old days the *mureu* was used whenever the whole country wished to ward off danger. When, at a certain district gathering, it was decided to send delegates to a *mugɔme* concerning the occurrence of many deaths in the district, one young woman objected, saying, 'It is nonsense; we know the sickness is not "sent". If you go to the *mugɔme* and he "beats" (points out) members of your family, the whole district will be quarrelling.' The *mugɔme* pointed out the young woman who had objected, but she demanded that, if any one accused her, he should go with her to another *mugɔme*, and when she appealed to the capital for appointment there of the official witness, no one came forward as a direct accuser and for that reason the case broke down. Subsequent cases in which the young woman was involved reflected how the proceedings had not relieved, but aggravated, the sense of insecurity in the district. Shall we conclude that the remedy is worse than the disease? We cannot do so, because where there are no *mugɔme* proceedings, as on the highveld, the incidence of witchcraft and sorcery is not less. Moreover, *mugɔme* proceedings are believed to, and do often, remove grave threats to the community. In 1938 the tributary *morula* cider was being made at the village of the head of a sub-district. On the second day the cider frothed suspiciously and after a meeting of the sub-district, money was collected and representatives of every family went to the *mugɔme*, who found that the headman had poisoned the cider, and in truth everything pointed to the use of cattle-dip or locust poison. The matter was reported to the capital, where, without formal trial, the headman was ordered to leave the district. In our opinion a dangerous criminal had been successfully dealt with, but, what is more important, the feeling of security of the people had been restored.

We may now shortly examine some aspects of *khɔrɔ* control over *mugɔme* proceedings. The challenge, supported by a wager to submit the truth

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753 after the funeral. *Makhuma* also affects possessed people who fail to use their powdered medicine with the first-fruits.

Though usually associated with the stomach, the symptoms of *makhuma* are not very definite, diagnosis being chiefly *ex post facto*. If one child has died, any illness its successor might have, even beating of the fontanelle, is liable to be attributed to *makhuma*. After the miscarriage of Madume's wife, Dwagu, a non-related inmate of the same village, did not trouble to be purified when the doctor came; but when, shortly afterwards, his stomach became upset, he immediately attributed it to *makhuma* and hastened to take medicine for its removal.

[787] The conception of *khuma* has been extended into other fields. Divining bones *khuma* at the end of each month as well as when used to divine about a death, and must be washed in medicine before being used again.

[789] Similarly the rain charms of the queen are liable to *khuma* (or *figthcla*) unless given the first-fruits and the first termites of the year to 'bite' (*luma*) before any one else in the royal area eats them, as also when certain people neglect certain observances, such as burial in wet soil of infants dying before their teeth have appeared. *Hu khuma* of the rain charms has serious consequences, causing drought throughout the country. That Christians do not observe these regulations has as little effect on the rain as when Europeans do not conform.

753 826 *Hu fesa*, or the state of being 'hot', is a conception far wider than *muridi* or *makhuma* and is the antithesis of the condition of coolness which is conceived of as healthy, propitious, or right. The properties of this 'heat', which may be caused in a variety of ways, are not unlike physical heat. Bodily illness, even *muridi*, causes the blood to be 'hot' or to be 'boiling' and may be treated by 'cooling' the body: thus the *khitshila* ceremony, which removes the 'dirt' of death, also 'cools' people. The hair of near relatives is shaved with medicine and put in a wet place or in certain kinds of drought-resisting plants. But it is usually the source of the 'heat', not the 'heat' itself, the symptom of the disease, that is treated, though both may be dealt with. The blood of a woman in certain conditions—for example, after an abortion—is said to 'burn', she has (or is) *lesua* (great burning), and the man who has sexual intercourse with her also 'burns', but whether it is because the 'heat' is conducted to him or because of the disease, *ɗere* (coughing illness) or urethritis, which he contracts, is by no means clear. The treatment is directed at the disease in him, not towards counteracting the 'heat'. Often after steaming a patient, a river stone is pressed against all joints of the body and then taken back to the river, a treatment in which we may discern an attempt to 'cool', though it also contains the conception of 'throwing out'.

821 766 Since heat withers the vegetation and causes drought, it is opposed to rain. Precautions must therefore be taken against whatever is thought to cause the country to be hot and dry. A man succumbing to *ɗere*, a person struck by lightning, a woman dying in childbirth, and the foetus of a miscarriage—all these must be buried in wet soil or with rain medicine if the country is to be kept 'cool' and the rains are to fall. Coolness connotes rightness. Charms protecting the village against witches are

● 754 sometimes called *mukɔthɔ̀ɔ*, because they *rɔthɔja* (cause to be cool,

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calm, or soothe) the village. Cooling is an effective weapon against sorcery: when the doctor made Nagambi vomit the foreign object introduced into his stomach by a sorcerer and causing the illness *khileso* (thing caused to be eaten) he ordered it to be buried in a wet place and water to be squirted (*ku phasa*) over it with an injunction to the disease to return to its sender. Even the gods must be kept cool, for if hot they stand up (*va ema*), are discontented, and make trouble; hence the black river stone in many shrines and perhaps also the river stones in the drums. 'To cool' might be translated by our phrases, to calm, to free from agitation, to soothe, to appease, or, more generally, to put right.

The great role of sex in medical practice can only be briefly dealt with. Many illnesses and even death are attributed to sexual intercourse in certain circumstances or to some supposed abnormality in the sexual organs. Some men and women are believed to have a small thick hair (*levoya*) in their genitals which enters the stomach of any one with whom they cohabit and there pecks (*ku gɔba*). The *levoya* from a man will cause the woman he impregnates to die in childbirth, and the *levoya* of a woman kills all her lovers. Pheduli, whose wife's death was attributed to *levoya*, found some difficulty in re-marrying, and the parents of the girl whose love overcame her fear insisted on his submitting to curative treatment before the marriage. But usually there is merely rumour that So-and-so has *levoya* and no definite precautions are taken. Men avoid intercourse with a menstruating woman, not because of danger to her, but because, as even educated men in the towns believe, they are liable to become afflicted with swollen penis or urethritis. *Mafa*, swelling of the whole body, is contracted if one, without previous steaming and mutual inoculation, cohabits with one's deceased brother's wife; but a stranger, though liable to get ill, does not contract *mafa*, because it is chiefly due to the 'dirt' of one's brother.

To *ɖere* or *vulwedɛ vya vasadi*, the woman's disease, and the most dreaded of all diseases, more than 30 per cent. of the deaths of men during our stay among the Lovedu was attributed. It is believed to be contracted by a man if, without previous precautionary treatment, he has sexual intercourse with a woman who has had a miscarriage or abortion or whose child has died before weaning. So fatal is it regarded to be that, unless cured immediately, the patient's chances of getting well are seriously impaired by the weight of subtle mass suggestion and his complete surrender to the inevitable. One illustration, the death of an educated man and a close friend of ours, will suffice. He had an irritating cough which every one believed to be *ɖere*, but one European doctor found nothing wrong, while another, to whom we explained our anxiety, diagnosed miocardiosis, which would readily respond to hospital treatment. Our friend had no faith in the diagnosis and refused to go to hospital; he resorted to one Native doctor after another and vainly endeavoured to get 'medicine' from the girl he suspected. He became more and more emaciated, resigned himself to his fate and within a month after examination by the second European doctor he was dead.

Ɖere is not syphilis nor a sexual disease. Its main symptom is coughing, but any illness, even if there is hardly any cough, may be diagnosed as

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833 753 *ḓere* if the circumstances of the personal relations of the patient justify such a diagnosis. People thought that Maḓaradani's cough was *ḓere*, but when he insisted that he had no lovers it was diagnosed as *khileso*; Mulaḓa's debility was probably due to chronic malaria, but his friends suspected that he had taken no precautionary measures before resuming co-habitation with his wife, who had miscarried after seven months. *Ḓere* is distinguished from *lefiha* (consumption) by its rapid course and the fact that *lefiha* (*hu fiha*, to breathe) is not caused by women. *Ḓere* [847] can be cured only in its earliest stages, an ingredient of the medicine being a portion of the abortion or, in the case of intercourse with a woman who has lost a child, can be prevented by steaming and mutual inoculation. The prevalence of *ḓere* suggests that abortions are common and that effective abortifacients are in general use. In reality, however, innocent women are accused as soon as a lover falls ill, and rather than be thought murderers, they often give him medicine purporting to be a portion of the abortion mixed with sand to be used as a cure.

753 769 Disease and healing are in the last resort connected with the guardianship of the ancestors. If they are annoyed and relax their vigilance, their descendants may be rendered susceptible to disease, or medicines used cannot have their full effect. Ancestors, however, do not merely ward off disease or assist cure; they also actively cause illness. The crying all day of a baby may be due to the spirit of a grandfather pinching it in order that it should be given his name; sore eyes in children are often, and in adults sometimes, attributed to ancestors; barrenness or difficult birth is laid at their door, and sometimes they seize the whole body of a person because they wish to 'possess' him. But ancestors never cause death: even if at first an illness is said to be due to them, should death supervene, it is attributed to witches. Complaints of living relatives, especially of the father's sister, may also cause illness.

754 By far the most important of all causes of ill-health, however, is the evil work of witches and sorcerers. Certain illnesses, such as *khileso*, are characteristic of sorcery and can be contracted in no other manner. But any disease may be caused by witchcraft and witches may avail themselves of the opportunity offered by any minor illness to enter and aggravate it. Diagnosis depends on the course of the illness. Dysentery is regarded as due to natural causes; but should it not respond to treatment or should the patient suspect an enemy, a witch will be implicated. During the 1938 smallpox epidemic, the head of a district which was more hardly hit than its neighbours called a meeting of residents. Men declared, 'Smallpox kills people here; they merely get ill and recover elsewhere. There is a witch in our midst.' Money was collected, three men sent to a diviner, and, in the end, two women were accused. A specialized cause of illness is legitimate vengeance-magic used against theft and called *khidzha*, which makes the finger of the thief swell up or the stolen goat bleat in his belly.

752 It must not be imagined that the Lovedu do not recognize a large number of diseases as natural. Many illnesses 'just come'. Such are all minor ailments like coughs, colds, stomach disorders, and also other more serious diseases like dysentery and malaria. Too much beer is

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known to affect the stomach, many kinds of spinach to cause diarrhoea. Epidemics of smallpox, measles, coughs are thought to be brought by 'wind' (*phefo e ɸile*) and steps may be taken to combat them by sprinkling with medicines the inmates of the village. Usually an epidemic 'just comes', but on occasion one hears that a witch has 'sent' the wind. Ancestors, too, are thought to exercise some controlling influence over wind; in most libations they are asked, 'Prevent for us these winds'—that is, as we might phrase it in our prayers, 'Guard us from disease.' Diseases are never classified as natural or non-natural solely according to their nature or symptoms. Any natural illness may also be 'sent' and, though natural death is recognized as possible, in practice those closely affected always attribute death to witchcraft or sorcery, though outsiders may give other reasons and some even say of an old man dying, 'The gods have called him to rest.' Of the thirty deaths, including a number of old people, that came to our notice, none were, however, thought to be natural. Contagiousness (*ku fɗɨla*) of certain diseases, such as venereal diseases, leprosy, whooping cough, measles, is recognized, and it is known that consumption may be transmitted by parents to their children, as one of its names, *lokɔɟɨa la tate-mulɔgɔ* (cough of the family father) signifies.

There must, of course, be a body of professional men and women trained in and practising the art and science of medicine, but there are also many who have an extensive knowledge of home remedies. This is not unexpected in a society in which ordinary mortals live close to, and know a great deal about, nature. Every one is familiar with plants and their properties, which is one of the bases of pharmacology, with the meagre conceptions of anatomy and physiological relations, and with much of the intricate system of causation of disease. There are many men and women who know some special medicines or types of treatment, inherited usually from father, mother, or spouse, and kept secret, not because the knowledge is a source of material benefit, for the remedies are generally given free, but because it lends some recognition and prestige. Mamutho, despite all our efforts, divulged her medicine for inflamed eyes to us only as a parting gift. Madinji treats sprains and fractures; Khirbe specializes in mutual inoculation of the newly wed; and Khapani knows roots for dysentery. These are herbalists, not doctors, but some herbalists are so well-known for the efficacy of a medicine they have that even diviners send patients to them. Knowledge of these remedies, however important, does not make one a doctor (*Dɔga*): that appellation is accorded only to those who are initiated bone-throwers or as herbalists have achieved general recognition as dispensers of many medicines and treatments. Muhale's wife, though no bone-thrower, is a good midwife and wields expertly a blood-letting awl. But a herbalist, even if called *Dɔga*, remains *Dɔga-tshɨdɨya*, a doctor without horns (power), because he does not divine; he can prescribe for recognized diseases, but he cannot diagnose in other cases for which the divining dice are necessary. From our point of view, the herbalist diagnoses and prescribes along scientific lines; to the Native he is a novice unable to deal with witches or the more serious diseases.

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CHAPTER XIII

THE ROLE OF THE ANCESTORS

Ancestral caprices and complaints and rites to appease them—the universe of the ancestors a replica of the everyday world—relations of magic, morality, and religion—possession by spirits as a religion and socio-psychological phenomenon.

NATURE spirits and hero-gods have no place in the Lovedu scheme of things. There is, however, Khuzwane, the creator, who made all things, including men, and left his footprints on certain rocks in the north when these rocks were new and soft. But no one knows what has happened to him and no one ever thinks of him. The gods of the Lovedu are their ancestors, deceased fathers and mothers who guard one in death as they did in life. Each family has its own ancestors, and religious observances are thus peculiarly a family concern.

Ancestors have various attributes. They are one's protectors and no harm can befall one unless they, the ancestors, are neglectful. Witches, powerful as they are, can neither enter the village nor cause sickness without their connivance; hence the procedure in divination, even in the clearest case of witchcraft, of inquiring whether the spirits should be appeased. Disease cannot enter nor epidemics break out if only the ancestors are watchful enough and well-disposed. Again and again one finds this idea expressed in prayers; 'Protect us from epidemics [winds]', they say; while the queen in a prayer at her harvest ceremony put it even more positively: 'As regards life, we have been very well, but now we are being killed by that epidemic which you have allowed to come', referring to smallpox. There can be no success without the co-operation of the ancestors. Medicine cannot help nor doctors heal if the ancestors are not with one. This idea, reminiscent of our 'By the will of God', is expressed in the phrase, 'We do not say our doctor, [will heal]; we say our doctor and the ancestors'. It appears also in a prayer we heard on behalf of an absent son working in town, when a goat, dedicated to his grandmother (father's mother), who had made him ill two years before, was being given the new corn: 'Here is the child; here he is, mother. We ask that you let him be happy and cool (give him health). Tell all the other spirits [certain names mentioned], and we who remain, *we say our thing with the gods*.'

The phrase '*vadimo lalana*' (spirits, sleep) which rounds off so many prayers, and the constant fear of waking up (*ku dzuva*) the ancestors, causing them to stand (*ku ema*) and cause trouble, appear at first as a peculiar contradiction, as though people do not wish their gods to be watchful. The term *lala* is, however, idiomatic, expressing peace, things being as they should be, as in the phrase, '*Ha no malao; shago la lala*' (There was order; the country slept), implying that the rains were good and all was well; while *ku dzuva* in this sense means stirring to anger rather than waking up from sleep.

The ancestors are responsible for the fertility of the crops. True, nothing could grow without rain, for which the queen is responsible and

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CHAPTER XIV

WITCHCRAFT AND SORCERY

Techniques and manifestations of day and night witchcraft—distinctions between witchcraft and magic—smelling out of witches by the forensic physician—social incidence and psychological aspects of witchcraft.

754 *VULOI*, as the Lovedu use the word, comprises both witchcraft and sorcery, but the distinction between them, as accepted by many modern ethnographical writers, diverges considerably from the distinctions made by the Lovedu. In order, therefore, to preserve Lovedu conceptions and terminology, it is necessary, firstly, to use a single word—namely, witchcraft (*vuloi*), and, secondly, to distinguish night-witchcraft (*vuloi wa vusiku*) and day-witchcraft (*vuloi wa matsiaro*). *Vuloi* is distinguished from other forms of what we should call magic, not so much by the methods employed, though some of them are confined to witches, as by intent and results. *Vuloi* is anti-social; it is illegal and aims at harming people from motives of jealousy, revenge, frustration, or anger. Though witches are believed to have a kind of compulsion to do evil—their fingers burn to bewitch—they are never unconscious of their own evil deeds and powers, as has been reported by Junod for Shangana-Tonga and Stayt for the Venda. The witch knows his own powers and uses them to obtain his own ends. Knowledge of witchcraft does not inevitably involve its practice; the child of a witch may refuse to kill people while using his powers to increase his crops, and it is even possible for a witch to protect some one he likes against the machinations of others.

There are important distinctions between night-witches or night-witchcraft, on the one hand, and day-witches or day-witchcraft, on the other. The night-witch is a 'born' witch, taught in early infancy by his mother. He works chiefly by night, but can also work by day. The day-witch is any ordinary individual who, by means of medicine obtained from some doctor or witch, tries to kill his enemies. He has no knowledge of witchcraft beyond the medicine obtained for some definite end. There is a certain amount of vagueness about the distinction between day and night witches, and in practice, when any one is accused of witchcraft, there is never any inquiry into which type of witchcraft has been used. Nevertheless, the distinction is essential for an understanding of Lovedu witchcraft.

The night-witch is able directly, and without the aid of any medicine, to effect his evil purposes. He can enter a hut through the smallest crevice. But his absence from home will never be missed, because he will throw his slumbering companions into a deep sleep or even leave a hyena in his own image; but the soul is never sent out to do the work, as among the Azande. When one wakes up from a dream in a sweat or fright, it is a sign that night-witches are near, and in consultations with doctors such symptoms are often described by patients as very relevant to the diagnosis

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of their illness. Night-witches are not often seen by people, but there is 754
certain medicine which can be put in the village fence to keep a night-witch rooted to the spot, unable to move till you come and find him. As soon as he is addressed, he will scurry away. Those who have seen witches, always describe them as naked, perhaps because people always sleep naked wrapped in their blankets. The most effective way of keeping witches at bay is the placing of medicine (*diphaba*) round the village fence, which either makes them forget their errand or makes the village appear like water or a forest.

Night-witches cause all manner of illness in ways unknown to ordinary people. They may pour blood over you, then next day you are ill; your blood is not right and soon you die. They may cut off portions of your body to insert millet or sand, which causes intense pain. If your bones ache and you feel tired without knowing why, it may be that a night-witch has made you hoe in his garden all night or beaten you all over your body with sticks. Sometimes he even makes you ride a bicycle all night. Besides killing, night-witches are fond of causing barrenness in their enemies. They are great destroyers of crops. After you have ploughed, they go into your field and pick up all the seeds so that nothing grows, or they rob your field of its fertility to increase that of their own fields. They also send their familiars at night to milk your cows or let them out of their kraal to cause damage that may bring you to court. Night-witches form a sort of fraternity: they all know one another and meet at night to drum and dance for amusement. They also fight one another: those of an area in which the crops have failed will send wind to break mealies and trees in another area or worms to destroy the crop. The destructiveness of such contests is a reality to some, for in one district in which many worms appeared in the mealies, so we heard, a public meeting was held and one man accused Shangana-Tonga witches, whom he said he had seen the previous night. Often a real battle against foreign witches takes place in which wounds are received that the witch does his best to hide during the day. Witches have even been known to die from wounds received in battle at night, as sometimes admitted by themselves.

Night-witches employ familiars (*dithomya*) such as the hyena, the snake, 759
the *muishond* (*Poecilogale albinucha*), and, to a lesser extent, owls and 825
the striped *muishond* (*Ictonyx capensis*): both kinds of *muishond* are polecats or skunks. How the witch tames these animals is not known, but they become so intimate that they come at night to ask for food and call the witch their mother, but there is no sex relationship between witch and familiar as is reported for the Pondo. Two actual cases were reported to the queen while we were in the field in which 'sent' snakes had been killed; one of these had been found to contain porridge and relish, certain proof of its association with a witch. The difference between an ordinary snake which also bites and a 'sent' snake appears from the circumstances: if, for example, others walk along a path before you and escape, but you get bitten, then the snake must be 'sent'. For 'sent' snakes are real snakes; the Zulu practice of smearing medicine on sticks to turn them into snakes when your enemy passes is not known to the Lovedu. The most fearful of all familiars is, however, the *khiqhuane*, a 759

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754 human being who has been killed by a witch to be his slave. The *khidufuone* is not an ordinary corpse, though witches do call corpses out of their graves in order to cut off portions of their body for medicine, a procedure that can be prevented by magical protection of the grave. Only a person specially killed for the purpose can be a *khidufuone*; when they bury him, it is only his shadow that goes into the grave; the real person has been enslaved and put in a large earthen pot or in a cave. At night he hoes for his master, cuts poles for building, or goes on nefarious errands. If you meet a *khidufuone*, you faint at the sight, and even after medical treatment your body may feel dried up, as though it has no blood.

That the fear of *midufuone* is very real to the Native, and backed by what is to him convincing evidence, is shown in the case of Madume. In November, 1937, Madume, a man residing near us, died. Ever since his wife's death he had lived with (*ku gaula*) a woman whom he had never properly married and, after his death, it was rumoured that he had been killed by the mother of his son's wife for the sake of her daughter, who was jealous that her husband's father should be fonder of, and show more favours to, a concubine than to his legitimate daughter-in-law. The mother of the girl had first, so it was said, wanted to kill Madume's wife, but her daughter had argued that it would be better to kill Madume himself, since he might pick up some other woman and they would have the same trouble over again. How much of this story had actually been given by the diviner and how much was sheer surmise we were never able to discover, but a month after the death people began to be afraid to go near his village at night, as he had been seen standing at his gate. The concubine, afraid to remain at home at night, went to sleep with neighbours, whence she would return at dawn to do her household duties. One morning when it was just getting light, she rose to go home. On her way she suddenly ran shouting into the nearest village and fell in a faint at the entrance. People rushed to help her and called in Madume's sister
[157] to revive her in the manner usual in such circumstances: by holding smoking chips under the nose to cause sneezing (*ku ttswudisa*). She told them she had seen three *midufuone*, a man called Khishweni who had died long ago in the neighbourhood, and two children, dancing and singing on the road. From this evidence the conclusion was immediately come to that Khishweni must have been killed by the same witch as Madume, since both were walking about, and so great was the fear of going out at night that the women of the neighbourhood could not be persuaded to attend a girl's initiation ceremony which had begun before this episode.

755 Contact with Europeans has led to the conception of *khipogo* (spook) which must not be confused with *khidufuone*. A *khipogo* is the ghost of a dead person, but the sight of a *khipogo* does not, like that of a *khidufuone*, make one faint or dry up; it only makes one's heart jump in fright. Such a ghost can be laid by means of medicine (*diphaba*) on the grave. Children often run to their mothers with scared faces and bated breath to say they have seen a *khipogo*, sometimes even in broad daylight.

756 Night-witches can be male or female, but the great majority are female.

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There is nothing corresponding to the witch-substance found in the stomachs of Zande witches. A witch is said to imbibe witchcraft with its mother's milk, yet it involves learning, a process begun on the second or third day after birth, when its mother throws it up against the wall, to which it clings like a bat. On one occasion the anger of a grandmother that her grandchild had been 'taken out' of the hut (*hu thusa*) without her presence or knowledge was construed as due to a sense of frustration because this had prevented her from teaching the child witchcraft. The dullness at school of a certain girl whose mother was said to be a witch was ascribed to the difficulty of simultaneously learning two things: witchcraft and books. Since witchcraft is learnt from the mother (though one sometimes hears that the mother teaches her daughter, a father his sons), brothers and sisters of one mother cannot accuse each other of witchcraft without involving themselves; that such accusations do occur shows how theory often gives way to practical considerations. In one such case, where a woman brought her son to court for beating her and her daughter, the son accused his own mother and sister of killing his child. His sister asked, 'If I and my mother are witches, what about you?' When he replied, 'My mother stinted me, giving only you the knowledge,' the court laughed, saying, 'Boy, you're mad. Where have you ever heard of a man accusing his own mother of witchcraft?' But the boy insisted on going to a *magawe*, though the court warned him of the consequences of breaking his relationship with his cattle-linked sister, whose cattle, if called back because of the imputation, could no longer serve as a bond for future marriages. Night-witchcraft is learnt, but unlike day-witchcraft it can neither be learnt from an outsider nor be bought. Yet one hears of such transactions, more especially among Christians, who aver that payment consists of the blood of a close relative, usually your own child. Jeremiah associated the beginnings of his stepmother's witchcraft with the death of her own child, followed shortly afterwards by that of her step-daughter.

The day-witch is almost always a man, since women cannot easily buy medicines. He is distinguished from the night-witch by his use of medicine and spells. Spells have no fixed phraseology, but consist in telling the medicine what to do, mentioning the name of the person. Very often the medicine works as well without the spell as with it. The day-witch employs no familiars, belongs to no fraternity, does not inherit his knowledge. He is called a day-witch, not so much because he works by day, for he may work at night too, but because of the technique he uses. Whereas the night-witch himself goes out and steals your mealie seeds, the day-witch puts medicine on the soles of his feet and walks through your field; and while the day-witch introduces substances into your body by means of medicine, the night-witch employs a stout to take up its abode in you and eat all your food. Certain techniques are associated with day-witchcraft, though it is possible for any night-witch to use also all the methods of the day-witch, simply by getting the right medicine.

The day-witch can cause illness or death by *ku lapa*. *Ku lapa* means to try, to tempt, and hence, by extension of meaning, to challenge or to

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754 send misfortune by means of medicine. The witch may mix your foot-print with medicine or put a medicated thorn in the path you usually take, to cause pain in the leg, which gradually passes into the rest of the body and kills you. He may cause your death by pointing a medicated finger at you, or using water you have washed in or clothes you have worn. Hair and nails are, however, not much used in witchcraft and only a few people, more especially women, are careful about their disposal. To point at a man in a menacing way, or to say the words, 'You will see' (*u ḓo bona*), suffices, should evil befall him, as ground for an imputation of witchcraft. In a violent quarrel between a woman who had a child by her lover and the lover whom she had jilted because the liaison was causing trouble with her husband, the angry lover flung out the challenge. 'You've got a daughter who is my blood, yet you love me no longer. You will see!' A few weeks later the child became ill and died. The mother, overcome with grief and fury, carried her dead to the lover's house and threw it down, saying, 'Here is your meat. Cook it and eat it.' This phraseology suggests, though no one believes, that witches eat human flesh; it was construed merely as a dramatic accusation and created quite a stir; but it was considered justifiable in view of his threat. The *mugome* to whom the matter was taken pointed out, not the lover, but the woman's own husband as the culprit. When the latter, refusing to accept the verdict and to pay his bet, was required to leave the area, his wife, a staunch believer in his innocence, accompanied him. Use of *malego* by ordinary people is witchcraft, but its use by doctors against one another is legitimate. Doctors often 'try' their skill against one another: one doctor, we were told, turned himself into an elephant for the purpose of attacking his rival; not to be outdone, the latter became a bird and flew away.

754 821 Sending lightning, to cause lightning to strike (*ku tiisa ḓadi*), is a common means of harming one's enemies employed by day-witches. To say of a person, 'He knows lightning', is tantamount to calling him a witch, for, unlike the Zulu, the Lovedu have no socially recognized lightning doctors. The Lovedu distinguish two kinds of lightning—natural or 'lightning of the bird' and 'sent' lightning. The former comes with rain and is caused by the lightning bird, which has blue feathers and looks somewhat like a goose with large feet. These birds get no food unless there is lightning and then their food is the *mabululu*, the blue-headed tree lizard. When the bird strikes a tree, it leaves its urine as a white substance at the root; then doctors come and take the soil into which it has soaked to be used as medicine to cause lightning or for curing burns. Natural lightning, in theory and according to the diagnosis of the dice, is believed to strike only trees or rocks far from villages, never animals or people; but some say that it is dangerous to men in autumn, when it follows the sweet sorghum spat out on the road. 'Sent' lightning, on the other hand, strikes near the village, killing cattle or people. It comes with little or no rain and is more terrifying than that of the lightning bird. Lightning is judged almost solely by its results: *if it does no harm it is natural; if it strikes any one or destroys anything in the village it is ḓadi ya vathu or khiḓadi vhathumwe*, 'sent' by people.

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Doctors frequently 'try' one another by sending lightning. A lightning witch may either fly himself or may smear medicine on a dove or a red-winged locust which, when it thunders, is able to 'go with the lightning' and strike where its owner wishes. Use of the lightning bird itself for this purpose is impossible. A man who himself strikes as lightning must be scarified with medicine containing some portion of the lightning bird, and when learning to strike may be taken to a high desolate place where he is taught accuracy by being required to strike one of a number of aloes in a row. An informant once saw a man with black-and-white stripes all over his body and two branches tied to his hips; he concluded that this must be a lightning witch (*cf.* the striped hyena with its mane of upright hair on neck or along back, or the striped polecat, which bristles up its tail in anger). One who controls lightning is able to prevent it from striking him by cutting or piercing the flash with a medicated axe or spear, telling it to go elsewhere. Lightning frequently strikes villages and people in Vuloovedu and in many instances some accusation is brought before the court. Huts may be magically protected against lightning. If a witch strikes a protected village, it is believed that he will 'fall', change into a person, and can then be caught. There are no taboos against milking or working during lightning, but the day after it has struck the whole district has a holiday.

Day-witches use several other techniques. A very common form of day-witchcraft is *ku lesa* (to cause to eat), the introduction of medicine into beer or food, which on being swallowed turns into an indigestible piece of meat or other object that makes one ill. Most people one meets have at some time or other suffered from *khileso*. To pour real poison into food (*ku shela khitaba*) is a modern though still very uncommon method of killing. *Ku fakitja* (*ku fa*, to die, *ku titja*, to cause to go for) is to cause a person to leave home, e.g. for European employment, and die far away. This is done chiefly by day-witches, but also sometimes by night-witches; it is, however, neither common nor well-known. Modern conditions, with increased tribal contacts in European towns, have led to a tremendous increase in day witchcraft. New methods and medicines for *ku loya*, unknown in the tribe before, are being introduced. Some even go so far as to say that the sending of lightning is a relatively recent thing from Natal.

There are many practices bordering on witchcraft, indistinguishable from day-witchcraft in technique and method of procedure, but considered legitimate and therefore not witchcraft in the true sense. Some of these are so close to, that they are sometimes looked upon as witchcraft. The deciding factor in such cases is always the result: if it causes death it is witchcraft; if it does not, or if it is done with an object that is recognised as legitimate, it is not witchcraft. *Ku dakcha* is essentially legitimate. Its technique consists in changing the nature of things, making medicated pieces of the skin of an animal turn into the animal itself, changing a person's sex, and one of the best-known doctors in Lovedu-land is skilled in *madabi*. It is a technique confined to men, employed to make a woman marry you or to frighten her into coming back to you when she has run away. No one has ever heard of a woman sending

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754 789 *madabi*.[1] A woman ran away from her husband to live with another. Whenever she was cooking or doing her household duties at her new home, monkeys and other animals appeared at the village till, frightened out of her wits, she ran back to her first husband. *Madabi* are often sent in connexion with childbirth. Sometimes the sending of *madabi* is looked upon as witchcraft. Malaji changed the sex of Muhale's daughter so as to make the birth difficult each time she was about to bear a child, because the child was his, but the girl no longer loved him. We were not allowed into the hut, but the midwives, whom we knew well, testified to a real change, though probably because certain types of difficult birth are conventionally so explained. Eventually the birth took place, but shortly afterwards the baby was dead. This was considered to be witchcraft, the case was brought to court, and a large fine imposed. Only the doctor who used *madabi* can undo or reverse its power by *hu dabekulla*, but other doctors may, if there has been any injury, heal it with medicines.

789 A practice similar to *madabi*, but differing from it in object is *maḓilebɔ*. At the time of the Swazi raids, Raŋwagu, instead of hiding in the forests, put his faith in *maḓilebɔ* (marvel, wonder). When the enemy came, his village turned into water and they could not find his cattle, though they heard their lowing. Masia, who was wanted by the police during the whole period of our investigation, was able, when chased by them, to disappear even in the open; he would hang like a bat on a plough to look just like a spanner. When eventually he was arrested, he averred, and many people agreed, that it was because he was tired.

Khidɔba is a technique used against thieves and it is both public and legitimate. Some kinds of *khidɔba* are known as a home remedy; some are obtained from doctors. By means of medicine used on *ledzigeri* grass (*Hyparrhenia Tamba*), one can cause a severe and painful itching in the finger of the thief which may compel him to confess. Likewise, by *hu dɔba*, a stolen goat may be made to cry out in the thief's belly, as happened in a recent case, probably of compulsion neurosis, in which bleating was taken as conclusive proof of his guilt. Another method of *hu dɔba* causes the eyes of the thief to protrude till they fall out on to his stomach; if his mother then cries on seeing him, he may die. *Khidɔba* strikes the thief even when he hides or sells the stolen goods. Besides these measures, taken to bring a thief to book after the theft, one may by anticipation protect one's property by means of a piece of *letsete* cush (*Maerua* sp.) split at one end to resemble the mouth of a snake and smeared with coloured medicines. When placed at the hut entrance or on the border of your field, it turns into a snake and bars the entry or exit of a thief. A doctor we knew used to have serious talks with his son about the fortune he would make if he knew this medicine, especially in Johannesburg, where theft is common and victims pay high prices. The only recognized cure

[1] The word comes from *dalo* plus *isbi*; *dalo* (well being), is a noun from *hu lala* (to lie down, to be peaceful), and *isbi* means bad. *Dalo* should be calamity, but it is used only in the sense of excessive rain (causing evil). The plural, *madabi*, means misfortune or pain or disease legitimately 'sent'. The verb is *hu dabeka*, legitimately to send misfortune, and its converse, *hu dabekulla*, means to neutralise or remove the effects of *madabi*.

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of the power and effect of *hu dɔba* is by asking for pardon, when the doctor who gave or used the *khidɔba* will be asked to *dɔbulla*, i.e. reverse the effects of his medicine. He will usually charge a large fee (even an ox), which he shares with his client.

Use of medicine on a grave which causes the death, not only of the witch who killed the deceased, but also of other members of his family is not considered to be witchcraft. This is called *hu tsikɬa* or *hu dicla levigla* (to work on the grave) and is done in various ways: the corpse may be smeared before burial, or the seed of a certain plant from Rhodesia sown on the grave, and when it grows the witch will die, or medicine and the stomach contents of a goat may be poured down a hole to reach the body in its grave. This is the usual sense in which *hu tsikɬa* is used, but sometimes it is conceived of as a kind of *hu dɔba*, against a thief with the purpose of wreaking vengeance, not only on him, but also on all those who have eaten of the thing stolen, whether they are innocent strangers or guilty accomplices. It kills, unlike *hu dɔba*, which merely injures. As in *khidɔba*, this form of *hu tsikɬa* is more or less public, for the villagers and neighbours must be previously informed, so that they will have an opportunity to confess. The other and more usual form of *hu tsikɬa* is directed against witches who are murderers and for that reason it is not public, for it is conceived that the witch might take counter measures or bribe a bad doctor to 'call back' the medicine. It may be sent to a definite person discovered by consultation with the bones, but the name of the person will not be mentioned in the spell lest the witch take counter measures. The spell is not in set terms, but it usually runs as follows: 'You Mufuba (the deceased in the grave whose death is to be avenged), we are to-day working on your grave. We call all those who killed you to follow you to the grave. We do not say only one of them. We mean all who are of them [the whole family]. Do you also call them, so that all of them should follow you.'

A death is sometimes ascribed by the bones to *hu tsikɬa*; and in one case the suicide of a girl, who was said to have bewitched her husband's people, was found to have been caused by such medicine. Paradoxical as it may seem, it is possible for a witch, who gets a doctor to *tsikɬa* for him, to be struck down by the medicine intended for another. It is curious that, though he knows that the medicine seeks out the true witch, he will risk such a procedure, but the explanation is that, though a doctor might be deceived—his bones confused by the witch's medicine (*khiɣalaŋaga*)—the medicine cannot be, and that the fatal effect of *hu tsikɬa* is diagnosed *ex post facto*. Thus in one case where a woman died, her sister went to a *tsikɬa* specialist; but subsequently the sister herself and some of her relatives died. When a great *magome* was consulted, he said that the sister had sent *mutsikɬa* to people whom the hated and that, not finding the murderer there, it returned and struck down the sender. *Mutsikɬa* will continue its deadly effects unless 'stopped' by the doctor who sent it, though there is a medicine (*leɬɬo*) which may be eaten by all those who think they are in danger of vengeance-magic to neutralize its effects. It is recognised that the witch may retaliate in the case of vengeance-magic, though this is considered unusual and almost always ineffectual.

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754 There are many other specialized techniques, but for our purposes it
832 will suffice to refer briefly to love-magic. Love-medicine was not known
789 to the Lovedu, and its use is generally said by the older people to be witchcraft. Nevertheless, this magic, introduced from the towns, where, especially among Zulu and Xhosa, it is common, is used by many young men in Vuloyedu to-day. One method, scarification of the forehead or use of medicine in your snuff, makes all the girls love you; blowing a medicated pipe of the *mukhure* shrub (*Ricinus sp.*) morning and evening, while calling the name of a certain girl, will make her come to you soon; and there are various other medicines. Love-magic to cause hysteria in girls is known as a Zulu practice, but is not used in Vuloyedu. It would be looked upon as witchcraft.

754 These borderline methods, sometimes called witchcraft, sometimes
761 not, and often referred to as 'good' *vulsi*, bring us to a consideration of what constitutes *vulsi*. All witchcraft is socially disapproved, anti-social, but this criterion is not always sufficient to distinguish between witchcraft proper and practices bordering on witchcraft. Swearing at people, or scolding them violently, when the cause hardly justifies it, is liable to call down upon them forces which lead to death or misfortune to them or their family. It is called *lesola* and is reprehensible; but it is not *vulsi*; nor is *mahava*, illness caused by the ill-feeling of a father's sister or other relative. The conduct of a woman who, having had an abortion, causes her husband's death through neglecting to give him the medicine necessary to ward off such disaster is strongly disapproved of, but it is not witchcraft, even though it causes death.

Since many borderline practices are judged by their result and become witchcraft when they cause death, it might be argued that this criterion must be distinctive. It is, however, not enough; causing death to a husband by abortion is, as we have seen, not considered to be witchcraft, nor is the murderous *khigwetgwa* a witch, even though he secretly kills people at night and sells parts of their body to doctors. Furthermore, many accusations of witchcraft have arisen where there has been no death, but only sickness or loss by lightning. The only difference between the killing by a *khigwetgwa* and that by a witch lies in the method employed. The killer uses ordinary weapons; the witch kills by means of medicine or some peculiar powers not known to ordinary people. The distinguishing feature of all cases of witchcraft is the use or supposed use of medicine or witch-power. Intent is another feature by which one judges an action. Where a woman causes the death of a husband through abortion, her conduct is anti-social and the act is done in secret, but it differs from witchcraft proper in the absence of intent to kill. Fear of the consequences of adultery is the main force deterring her from correct behaviour; and it is argued that, if she really wishes to kill she need not employ so round-about a method.

754 The conclusion we may draw is that, for an action to be witchcraft, it must satisfy, not one, but all the following three requirements: it must be disapproved of, anti-social; there must be an intent to kill or to harm; and it must be thought that either medicine or the mysterious forces of night-witchcraft have been used. Secrecy is not peculiar to witchcraft; it is

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not a distinguishing feature, because it is characteristic also of most magic: one does not want witches to know the steps taken to counteract them.

Only a very small proportion of cases of witchcraft lead to an open accusation and legal procedure; for going to a *mugome* involves a long, expensive journey, and *khoro* proceedings do not stop the witch, who may indeed redouble his efforts. In many cases of illness diagnosed as due to witchcraft there is nothing definite said about the person responsible; the disease is cured, the cure itself usually involving magic to 'send back' the illness to its owner. The verdict of the dice is necessarily vague. Usually only the totem and sex are given and the client himself, with his knowledge of his own friends and enemies, decides which of them is meant. The dice may indicate a totem to which none of the client's friends or enemies belong; but even if he thinks he can place the witch, one illness would hardly end in an accusation. Even death need not necessarily lead to an accusation; the grave may be treated to 'send back' death to the witch, but there are many cases in which there is neither accusation nor treatment of the grave.

To cause a witch to desist, the victim or some one on his behalf more often, after consulting a doctor privately for instructions, may resort to *ku thela*—that is, shout out an indefinite warning from his courtyard, if possible within earshot of the suspected witch. There is no fixed formula, but usually the gist of the warning is as follows: 'People of this village, I want you to know that you must leave my "person" alone; you must not kill him. If you kill him, I shall get a doctor to kill all your relatives. If my "person" has done any harm to you, I will pay for him; if he has done no harm, you have no right to make him ill. To-morrow I want my "person" to walk. If he dies, you will see.' In one case a girl suffered from epilepsy and her father, standing in the courtyard, shouted, "The person who bewitched my daughter, I know him. I shall kill him with an axe. I speak not to the villages of Phedula, Mungadani, and Ratshegu. I mean this village of ours.' In another case, when a snake appeared at the *nyali* initiation and a diviner had indicated two men as the culprits, an old woman, the herald at the capital, in the presence of the women in the courtyard, called out, "The person who has sent these snakes will feel pain. The *gwa* of the queen is not to be "tried" (*ku lega*).' Very often there is a threat that, if the sick person is not cured, the injured person will go to a *mugome*. The procedure is said to shame (*nyadisa*) the witch, or he may take fright and withdraw the witchcraft he has sent.

Sometimes, when you have a witch in the village, so that strengthening of the fence would be of no avail, you *fira* him, i.e. cause him to forget to act and be 'cool', just as you *fira* the spirits to keep them satisfied. More usually, however, you just move away and establish your own village somewhere else. Thus, when Rasodi's daughter lost her baby and the doctors all agreed that the husband's people were responsible (some said the husband's mother, others mentioned another relative), they quietly moved away, having been warned not to talk much about the removal, lest the witch get to know.

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754 483 787 Accusation of a specific person may lead to *khɔrɔ* proceedings, which involve, as described elsewhere, the appointment of the 'ears', who receives a goat or 10s. from each party as well as provisions, a wager of a head of cattle, or £1 10s. or more, and payment, the vanquished eventually to reimburse the victor, of £1 10s. or more, as the fee of the *mugɔme*. Occasionally in practice, if accused does not demand to have his innocence proved, the accuser does not go to court and the matter is left. All victims of witchcraft do not act in the same manner. One man proceeds to a specific accusation the very first time he is harmed, another only if the same witch has been responsible for many evils; if the witch is a great rival or personal enemy, the victim more readily resorts to action, but a commoner, unless he is prepared to leave the district, will be careful to avoid accusing his district head or a relative of the queen. A victim never makes an accusation without previous private consultation with a number of doctors and often even a *mugɔme* as well, and the accusation is conveyed to the witch, either directly by the victim or indirectly by his intermediary, and usually in metaphorical language. In case of illness, the witch may be invited to 'come and *phasa* for our patient' or, in case of death, to 'come and shave us', duties which only special relatives can perform; or, more directly, he may be asked 'to come with us to consult the bones'. The accused will then demand to go to a *mugɔme* to clear his name; if he does nothing, but merely remains inactive, his accuser may proceed further and take the case to the *khɔrɔ*.

When proceeding to a smeller-out, the parties have no definite destination. They set out in a north-easterly direction, where *mugɔme* abound, usually with the intention of going somewhere very far away. After a day or two, however, they grow tired, or the official witness complains of the heat, and they find some one nearer. The witness has on his person an object called *phitho* that has been given to him by the court or at the royal village. This the smeller-out has to name and find, and it is said that, unless, in addition, he is able to give the totem of every one in the party and clearly to distinguish between accuser, accused, and official witness, they will pass on to some one else. How far this is carried out in practice we shall see later. It is sometimes said by Europeans that smellers-out have spies who bring them the information necessary for their divining. This would, however, be impossible: not only do people come from all directions or tribes, sometimes as far distant as Mapulaneng beyond the Olifants River, but it would require an elaborate system of espionage that could hardly be kept secret from the people in the conditions that obtain in Bantu society. Moreover, the methods employed by smellers-out make such a system unnecessary. There is no doubt that *mugɔme* are clever, and we have ourselves been amazed at the manner in which, under test conditions, a *mugɔme* was able to name and find an object hidden on our person. But it must be borne in mind that they use a trial-and-error technique based upon the responses of the audience. Of course, the presence of a European is always a disturbing factor, but in our experience, after the first few responses, the *mugɔme* begins to speak more and more loudly and quickly and a situation of free association of ideas and great suggestiveness arises. The consultants

7 A [Accusation of witchcraft; see Col. 116, pp. 203–4. —Analyst.]

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become less guarded and the *mugome*, skilled in his art, is able to draw conclusions from their reactions. A good deal of vagueness is permissible: the term *mukhalaga*, for example, can refer to a number of different totems: *mukhalaga* proper, *mukhalaga munyai*, *mukhalaga ɗou* (elephant), and this applies also to other aspects of their divination. An actual example, albeit a case of theft, not witchcraft, will elucidate the methods employed.

Mudana accused Bodile, his half-brother's son, of stealing £9. The case had been tried first at home, and then at the Native Commissioner's, where it had been dismissed owing to insufficient evidence. The parties decided to go to a smeler-out. On the second day of their journey, when they were resting under a tree to enable the official witness to take off his jacket, a small boy standing some way off said to them, 'There is a *mugome* over there.' He was a decoy watching the road to direct people to a diviner who had lately arrived and set up a temporary village of rough huts. Deciding that it was too hot to go further, the party followed the boy and sat down outside the village fence. A man approached them and, after ascertaining how much money they had to offer, showed them into an enclosure of old sacks. At the entrance stood the diviner himself, holding a stick under which the four of them were made to pass in single file. Diviners are said quite frequently to test their clients in some such manner; sometimes they are made to jump over a furrow and it is said the guilty man usually falls in.

When they had seated themselves on the ground, the diviner asked first of all for his money. The official witness handed him £1 5s., but he insisted on 10s. more, because, he said, it was a difficult case—one that had been much tried in other courts. Stick in hand, but without the use of any divining bones, the diviner began asking the party to respond (*hu vuma*). '*Ya vuma*,' they replied, and he proceeded with his chanting in a mixture of Sotho and Shangana-Tonga in sing-song phrases, at the end of which the clients had to assent. 'You have come from home on a matter', he began. Pointing to the official witness, he said, 'You have accused this boy (pointing to Bodile) of witchcraft. No. I'm making a mistake on purpose. You have not come for this reason.' Looking into a large shell, he continued, 'You have come on a different errand. You have come about money. The sum concerned is £30. No. It is £15. No. It is £10. The *owner* of the money sells hemp.' Continuing in this manner in short phrases, to which the party responded '*Ya vuma*,' and, suggesting first this, then that, he eventually said, 'I don't like to cause brothers by the same father to fight. Your quarrel is a vain one. The money was stolen by a woman of the Crocodile totem living near your village. She has not yet used the money.' Pointing to Bodile, he said, '*You*, why do you want to kill *him* [Mudana], and you [Mudana] be careful. They may kill you with medicines they have just bought.' Turning to the official witness, he demanded, 'Give me my *phitho* (hidden object). What kind of thing is this which is hidden from me? It is a snuff-box. No. It is a half-crown. No. It is a penny. No. It is European iron. If you think I am telling lies, take out of your left-hand pocket the thing which you have been given.' The official witness took out of

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787 his pocket the battery of a torch. He doubted the competence of a diviner who had been so vague about the nature of the object—'European iron' can be any metal object—but the main thing was that Bodile and Mudana were satisfied and so the party went home, relieved that it was an outsider who was found to be the culprit.

Objectively considered, this seance may appear naïve, but the parties, and even an outsider who was present, did not think so. There was no initial and formal identification of accuser, accused, and 'ears' which one expects from theoretical accounts; but forms and procedures are never set, and it is not unusual for these identifications to emerge later as the divination proceeds. It is by theoretical standards necessary that the *mugɔme*, as a test of his competence, should name the totem or other groups of the consultants, but in this case the parties did not even notice the omission, as they were satisfied on the main issue. The *mugɔme* erred somewhat as regards both the sum involved and the relationship of Mudana and Bodile; but the parties were impressed that he was only £1 out and, although they were not brothers, they were related through brothers. The wide connotation of terms and indefiniteness of conceptions lend themselves, as meanings and rigid categories in a European language cannot do, to manipulation by the *mugɔme* and ready acceptance by the parties of suggestions. In the *khɔrɔ*, the vanquished party often complains of the vague or incorrect indications as to totems and of other unsatisfactory features, but unless the 'ears' agrees, the *khɔrɔ* usually dismisses these objections, since, if he had really been dissatisfied, he would have demanded back the money from the *mugɔme* and proceeded to another. But it is necessary to add that the *mugɔme* often backs up his art with a very high-handed manner or behaviour. Some even beat witches that they have smelt out. It is usual for the diviner to shave one side of the head of the witch and to take from him his jacket or any other object of clothing he would like to have. To the accuser is given a buck's horn to blow on his way home as proof of his success and, when he enters the royal village to report, he is met with joyful trillings of women.

●754 The attitude of people towards convicted witches depends largely upon the nature of the crime, but also upon the number of relatives of the injured party living in the neighbourhood. If he has harmed a number of people in the area, or if the injured party has many relatives to side with him, the witch may be forced by public opinion to leave the area. Malaji, who had caused the difficult birth and the death of the child of his lover, became very unpopular when the witchcraft had finally been attributed to him; from being one of the cheerful young bloods in the district, he became reserved and restrained, and shortly afterwards he left to work in town. But he was not ostracized by any one except the relatives of the injured woman and, when he returns, if we may judge from other cases, the whole matter will have blown over. On the whole, the attitude of the general public to a convicted witch is one of unconcern as long as his efforts have not been directed against them personally. People are accustomed to living in an atmosphere in which any one of their friends or relatives may turn out to be a witch. The atmosphere is

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illustrated in a proverb the sense of which is that you may be the unsuspecting victim of the witchcraft of your closest friend, or, more literally, Bɛlɛgwane, the enemy, does not care; [so intimate with him are you that] you eat with him, [yet] he is the foe that eats you (*Bɛlɛgwane mulala a khi vone; u la nayɔ, gi mulala was hu la wena*). And people chased away as witches from one area or tribe never have any difficulty in being accepted into another.

Considerations such as the return of cattle are often strong enough to deter a man from chasing away a wife who has bewitched some one in the village (he would never chase away a wife merely for bewitching outsiders). When once we asked a man why he kept a wife who had been found guilty of bewitching her fellow wife, he replied, 'She is my witch' (*gi mulɔi wa ga*). Being fond of her, he merely built her a separate village. Some people who have never been publicly accused of witchcraft are nevertheless known to be bad witcher. In such cases, people may fear them and try to keep on good terms with them in order to avoid evil consequences.

One of the most fruitful studies in regard to witchcraft is the investigation of the relationship of the people who bewitch one another. Two main categories must be distinguished, viz. cases in which relatives bewitch one another and cases in which the evil is sent by non-relatives. The Lovedu maintain, and the opinion is borne out both by one's general impressions and by the facts, that witches injure mainly those with whom they are in close contact—that is, relatives and neighbours—and that it is difficult to bewitch a stranger. And it is remarkable that of fifty cases of witchcraft observed by us as they came before the *khɔrɔ* and given in the table below, 70 per cent. involve close relatives. Not all relatives are apt to bewitch one, but both men and women are equally liable to harm either men or women. A mother never, it is believed, bewitches her own children, and there is even a saying to the effect that a *mugɔme* who points out one's mother is not able to divine (*mugɔme u a tia vumnahu a u khɔni hu laula*); and, although brother and cattle-linked sister sometimes hate one another, openly as well as secretly, they cannot harm one another, it is said, because they would use 'the medicine bag of the [same] mother'. Similarly neither a son nor a daughter can bewitch the mother.

The most prolific single source of witchcraft is the conflict of co-wives (24 per cent. of all cases). Their relationship in the polygynous family is a difficult one; the houses are independent, not subservient to one another, yet they are in close contact, and the insistence upon compromises occasions many mental conflicts. Spouses also bewitch one another, but wives kill or injure their husbands more frequently than husbands kill their wives; it is said that a husband who has only one wife will never bewitch her, except perhaps among Christians, who can have only one wife. The conflict of spouses is an aspect of a wider institutional conflict, that between relatives-in-law. If they have *irhaome* obligations towards one another, the society insists that their relationship shall be characterized by mutual respect and helpfulness and that their difficulties, especially *munyunalo* difficulties, are to be resolved as far as possible by the methods and procedure of the *khɔrɔ*. These factors explain why,

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754 578 despite the many sources of tension between them, the cases are not, as one might expect, overwhelmingly predominant: only 20 per cent. of the total given in our table are cases of wives or their relatives bewitching husbands or their relatives, and only 16 per cent. husbands or their relatives bewitching wives or their relatives.

What is even more arresting is the fact that easily aggrieved relatives who, as it is phrased, are 'very sensitive' and readily nurse grievances, never or rarely bewitch: such are cattle-linked brothers or sisters, father's sisters, fathers, father's brothers and grandparents. It is even clear from what we have already said that they are believed to have repressed complaints, but they cannot project as witchcraft the displeasures or misfortunes or failures upon those who must, but do not, respect and humour them. They can and do cause illness, but it is not by way of witchcraft, and the resolution of the conflict is by pardon and *ku phasa*, through the gods, not through *vubi*. In other words, witchcraft is a reflection, not of tensions as such, whether open or repressed, but of tensions within the framework of cultural mechanisms for avoiding their being projected as witchcraft. They must be studied in the whole configuration of institutions and social values: the permissible or approved remedies, the interposition of the hierarchy of age and rank between competing individuals, the compromises and reconciliations that are insisted upon, and the extent to which mental drives are conditioned to the cultural pattern or allowed outlets or are blocked by culturally stressed values.

The incidence of witchcraft between strangers is much more intelligible to us, because it arises in situations of conflict that are not very different from our own. But the percentage of these cases (30 per cent.), even when we include the 10 per cent. of cases between distant kin who are neighbours rather than relatives, shows how largely the social structure is built upon the kin.

754 578 595 The following table represents a very broad analysis of fifty cases of *witchcraft that we observed as they came before the Mkoro* and that may be simplified for statistical presentation:

Category of conflict	Witch(es)	Victim(s)	No. of cases	Remarks as to nature of conflict	Percentage of cases
1. *Relatives* (a) House or co-wife against house or co-wife	Co-wife	Co-wife	1	Jealousy about lovers; neglect by husband	
	Co-wife	Co-wife and child of co-wife	2	Jealousy about children and husband's attention	
	Co-wife	Child of co-wife	3	Disagreements about marymale	

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Category of conflict	Witch(es)	Victim(s)	No. of cases	Remarks as to nature of conflict	Percentage of cases
I. *Relatives* (a) House or co-wife against house or co-wife—*cont.*	Co-wife and her mother	Co-wife's child	3	Favouritism of husband and other mixed motives	
	Inherited wife	Co-wife and her children	2	Use of cattle of one house by another and questions of prestige	
	Widow	Fellow widow's child	1	Property arrangements	
	Wife of brother	Wife of another brother	1	Complex jealousies	
	Son of co-wife	Chief son and his wife	1	Status and position	24
(b) Wife against husband	Wife	Husband	2	Friction, favouritism of other wives, position	
	Wife and/or wife's mother	Husband's adulterine child or lover	4	*Sexual jealousy and neglect of wife*	
	Wife	Husband's sister's child	1	Disagreement about marriage of children and marysuals	
	Wife	Husband's brother, his wife, or his child	2	Position, jealousy	
	Wife's mother	Husband's child	1	Disagreements	20

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Category of conflict	Witch(es)	Victim(s)	No. of cases	Remarks as to nature of conflict	Percentage of cases
(*c*) Husband against wife	Husband	Wife	1	Pre-marital seduction and *munywalo* trouble	
	Husband	Wife's adulterine child	2	Husband impotent; sexual jealousy	
	Husband	Wife's sister	1	Husband jilted	
	Husband	Brother's son's wife and her mother	1	Revenge for misfortune (illness)	
	Husband	Wife's brother's daughter's husband	1	Wife's brother refused his daughter as wife to witch's son	
	Husband's mother	Wife		Unfaithfulness of wife	
	Husband's mother	Wife's sister	1	Wife's sister jilted witch	16
(*d*) Parent and own child	Son	Father	1	Son wished to oust father from position as district head	
	Father	Son	1	Son cohabited with young wife of father	6
	Father	Son's wife	1	Son cohabited with inherited wife of father	
(*e*) Uterine brothers and sisters	Elder sister	Younger sister	1	Younger sister jilted elder sister's husband	
	Sister (and mother)	Brother's child	1	Brother resents power of sister, and *munywalo* trouble	4
Total relatives					70

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Category of conflict	Witch(es)	Victim(s)	No. of cases	Remarks *re* nature of conflict	Percentage of cases
II. *Strangers* (*a*) Sexual conflicts	Girl	Lover	1	Lover jilted girl	
	Boy	Lover	1	Lover engaged to her cross-cousin	
	Adulterer	Married woman's child	2	Loss of fine and right to woman or child	
	Commoner (orphan)	Girl of noble birth	1	Refusal of marriage by parents who had adopted orphan	10
(*b*) Various conflicts	Man and his mother	Whole village	1	Status, loss of prestige and amenities	
	Woman	Distant male relative	1	Refusal to implement economic arrangement *re* partner-ploughing	
	Widow	Distant male relative	1	Indirect economic rivalries	
	Man	Male neighbour	1	Stranger held cattle that came from witch as *muyuvalo*	
	Man	Male neighbour	1	Envy of sewing machine acquired in town by neighbour	
	Man	Driver of car	1	Jealousy *re* privileges secured because he could drive car	
	Male friends	Man	1	Man's popularity with girls, owing to dancing ability, resented	
	Woman	Rival	1	Rivals for councillor's attention, sexual and otherwise	
	'Mother' of *khobe*	*Khobe* initiate	1	Initiate who is to marry cross-cousin wanted by witch as daughter-in-law	
	Shangana-Tonga	Lovedu man	1	Competition for job in town	20
Total strangers					30

It will take us too far afield to discuss the nature of the conflicts in detail in the various cases. But a few observations are perhaps necessary.

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Firstly, the cause of the conflict is not necessarily the one assigned by the parties, though the objective situation is often seen by others. Sometimes very trivial causes are given, but they have to be interpreted in their total setting. Secondly, as regards non-relatives, it is said that nobles are sometimes 'seen in the dice', but they are never publicly accused by mere commoners; it will be noticed that, on the other hand, there is one case of a noble accusing a commoner. Rich people who are not nobles enjoy no special immunity; unpleasant people, especially those who are quarrelsome, ambitious, or competitive, are often accused. Conflicts arise owing to close contacts, but may continue after the parties are separated, and witchcraft may be sent any distance, even as far as Johannesburg. Thirdly, the table does not give a number of types of cases; they are merely the cases that came before the court, many of them being dismissed as nonsense. Finally, although the motives are complicated in most of the cases, it is possible to say that jilted love or refusal of sexual advances is an important factor in about 32 per cent. of the cases recorded.

But we must not think of Freudian repressions, for sexual affairs are given recognition in the institution of *vuhabu*. We must consider lovers' conflicts in the cultural setting. The sexual urge is not repressed, but the lover whose advances are rejected, though he has opportunities elsewhere, feels aggrieved. The girl, whose choice of a marital partner is limited, seeks extra-marital adventure, but it must be clandestine and occasions difficulties, and the situation between lover, husband, and wife is an uneasy one in which ill-feeling readily arises. The man who has a child by a lover has no institutional claim on that child, and he may be given away by the woman and have to pay a heavy fine, with the result that he is angered. There are also dangers in sexual intercourse and, if a man or woman suffers as a result, he may take revenge. In other words, the conflict situation must be ascribed, not to repressions, but to the incidents of the whole cultural system. Similar considerations apply whenever we analyse any of the other situations of conflict. It is far beyond the purpose of this book to undertake an analysis of the psychological aspects of these conflicts, but we would say that witchcraft is to be explained mainly, not by psycho-pathology, but by a relativistic psychology, arising out of the values and institutional configuration of the culture.

When a man is ill he will immediately, if he has an enemy or has had a quarrel, think of the possibility of witchcraft. This impulse is encouraged by the technique of the dice, which, while indicating the totem or sex of the witch, leaves the client to decide to whom among his friends, enemies, or relatives these must apply. A person with a grievance or an unpopular person is more likely than others to be thought responsible for harm. When some cattle of the queen, usually used by Mudumi for ploughing, were traded to a European, he complained most bitterly. A week later when lightning struck a storage enclosure in the royal village Mudumi was immediately suspect. Some of the cattle belonging to Setemane's inherited wife had been taken by the police, together with those of her husband, in settlement of a debt. She grumbled continuously about her loss. A year and a half later, on the death of a child of her fellow wife, she was suspected at once and, after consultation of the

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bones, her husband chased her away. A person with an unpleasant face very often earns the reputation of being a witch, even though nothing has been definitely attributed to him. A very old person, too, is apt to be thought a witch; his long life is attributed to his bartering the lives of younger relatives for his own. Just as people with grievances are suspected of witchcraft, so successful ones are thought to be specially liable to being bewitched—those who reap better crops than others, successful hunters, those favoured by their European masters. On the other hand, their success is also liable to be attributed to witchcraft on their part.

It has been said that witchcraft is a reflection of the intense hatreds of which the Bantu mind is capable. True, the European is appalled at the seriousness of the crimes attributed to witches for the most trivial reasons. The mother's brother's wife kills the child of her husband's sister who is living with them because he eats too much: 'he finishes our corn'; because a woman no longer loves him, a man not only causes intense suffering to her during a prolonged birth, but also kills the child; jealous of the large crop reaped by his neighbour, a man sends lightning to destroy his whole harvest. These things do not, however, present themselves in this way to the mind of the Lovedu. A Lovedu argues, not from real cause to effect in such matters, but from effect to cause, which makes it all appear in a somewhat different light. A child dies and he looks around him for a possible cause. He thinks of possible motives and enemies, but can find none. He consults the dice, which point to a woman of such-and-such a totem. The only one to answer this description is the mother's brother's wife. She happens to be known as ungenerous, perhaps she was one day heard to comment on having an extra mouth to feed. The misfortune is thus projected upon her: but it is not a psychopathic, it is an approved cultural escape technique or compensation. In cases of illness or death, people tend to seek the cause in the direction of traditional jealousies. A wife of the queen dies in childbirth. The cause cannot be a jilted lover, because she and the father of the child were on the best of terms. But he is a married man, and women are known through jealousy to cause difficult childbirth to the lovers of husbands. The death must have been caused by his wife (even though she lives miles away). Nothing is done in the matter; moreover, there is no general agreement in the verdicts of different doctors. Six months later a young girl in the village dies suddenly of blood poisoning; her mother is known to have had quarrels with the deceased wife of the queen. It is therefore generally rumoured that the grave must have been treated to 'send back' death and the death of the child indicates that her mother was the witch responsible. Nothing more is said of the lover's wife.

Witchcraft provides an explanation of the worst evils, such as sickness and death, that befall man; it is the principle of evil, the Bantu fiction. Illness caused naturally or by ancestors is generally curable; it is only witchcraft that really kills. It was at first a source of great amusement to us that a man could find it possible to live on socially good terms with some one who had killed his father, attending the same beer-parties and able to converse in friendly fashion. But unless the case has been publicly dealt with and the witch smelt out, the evidence is considered incomplete,

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754 761 777 in spite of one's own convictions. Moreover, it does not follow that the witch has any evil designs upon one, though he has killed some one else. Personal adjustments with the witch are more easily achieved than we might imagine; they are even imperative, partly because witchcraft is so universal a cause of death that in this respect the witch is almost part of the inevitable order of things, partly because, unless a confirmed witch, he is not regarded with horror by the whole society, and partly because he may be an influential and respected man.

Witchcraft serves also to explain the differential incidence of misfortune or death which we generally leave unexplained; but it is not often invoked in this respect. An old, dried-up tree stands in a field. People often rest beneath it at hoeing time. One day, while two children are sitting in its shade, it falls down and kills one of them. The Lovedu realize that dead trees are liable to fall down. But it has long been standing there. Why has it fallen just on that day and, moreover, at that particular time when the children were there? Further, what made it kill one, leaving the other unhurt? This combination of circumstances must, they feel, be due to some malignant controlling force directed against the child. Or, when people recover from a disease such as smallpox in one district, but succumb to it in another, the differential effect in the latter is ascribed to the work of a witch. The occasion for evoking witchcraft as an explanation in certain circumstances is an aspect of witchcraft, but it is not an explanation of its nature and psychological basis and only part of the explanation of its function.

754 828 Witchcraft is employed to account for unusual or anti-social behaviour. Hysteria might be attributed either to witchcraft or possession. A girl ran away from her own puberty ceremony, an unheard-of and reprehensible action. Her relatives said she must have been bewitched into doing it, so, instead of being punished, she was given treatment to remove the baleful influence. Attributing certain types of anti-social action or the breaking of some customs to witchcraft makes it possible for the society to withstand successfully many blows; an issue is avoided and the transgressor made to feel himself incapable of such actions but for the witchcraft. We must also remember that abnormalities need not necessarily evoke comment. A person may be born an imbecile, but it may be considered quite normal. This is so because there is a place in the society for the weak-minded, sometimes even as jesters of the court. Personal defects or limitations do not, to the same extent as among us, disable a man from performance markedly below the standards required in spheres in which he can be useful; and thus there need not arise an intolerable situation from which escape is sought by psycho-pathological devices or the projection of one's misfortune on witchcraft upon others. Finally, to attribute death to witchcraft, and to set about taking steps to send it back to its owner, probably provides greater emotional satisfaction to the bereaved than the feeling of impotence in the face of an uncontrollable, natural force. The same kind of emotional need is answered when a man with a grievance feels that he can, in the last resort, employ medicine to gain his ends, and people not infrequently indirectly hint to their enemies the possibility of their doing so.

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ants etc termites before the *bulaxe* of the head. An inquiry was held by the district head and four men were fined two goats each. They were told that, if their case had come before the queen herself, they would have had to pay a head of cattle. Only the few sub-areas under the immediate jurisdiction of the queen herself send termites to the queen; in other areas they send to their own head, and there is no rule that the queen's own rain-charms should be given before others.

The powers of the queen to make rain are not absolute. The queen can control rain only 'in agreement with her ancestors' who are able, if they wish, to stay her hand just as she herself is able to stay the hands of rain-doctors. There are also certain things that, by causing the rain charms to become 'weak' (*fighela*), have power to stop the rain unless proper measures are taken. It has already been shown how heat is associated with illness and things being wrong. If a person has been burned to death or struck by lightning, he must be buried in a wet place near the river or his grave 'cooled' with special medicine obtained from the chief, lest drought ensues. Similarly, abortions or miscarriages, women dying in pregnancy or childbirth, twins killed at birth, babies dying before cutting their teeth or cutting the upper teeth before the lower, initiates dying in the circumcision lodge—all must be buried in a wet place.

Since an electrical storm often means little or no rain, it is believed that 'sending' lightning to kill one's enemies, a common practice of witches, spoils the country by preventing rain. Hence at a tribal gathering (*khintjo*), held in the spring of 1937–8, the people were told among other things that the chief does not want to see 'lightning of people' (as opposed to natural lightning); any district head hearing of anything like this among his people was to report at once to the queen. A common phenomenon in time of drought is the banking up of heavy rain clouds with all the promise of a soaking rain, only to be dispersed by wind. Anything associated with winds is thus thought to prevent rain. That is why witches, by hanging *lefalapa-mere*—literally, 'disperser of the clouds' (*Asparagus plumosis*)—or an ordinary broom on a branch where it will sway in the air, can disperse the clouds; and any one dying of a coughing disease, such as *ghve* or consumption, must be buried in wet soil or soil that has been sprinkled with *mafuga* medicine. If abortions or people dying of a coughing disease are buried without these precautions, the grave is called *pakudi* (from *ku pakula*, which perhaps is the opposite of *ku fuga*, to blow upon by a cool breeze, to sprinkle with cooling medicine). *Pakudi* contains the conception of wind issuing upwards or hot air quivering above a heated surface. As soon as the vapour-laden air reaches the grave, it stops or dissolves in the wind and it is even believed that the corpse, thrusting up an arm, waves it about to cause the wind that drives away the rain.

How dangerous wind is considered to be in setting at naught the efforts of the queen was well illustrated on November 15th, 1937. On that day, after propitious black clouds had been dispersed by a gale that lifted the thatch off many a hut, it was proclaimed that the following day had to be a holiday. People said, '*Ga khumela*' (it is a 'turning back' before the goal

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177 (workers), but 'Fools, why labour when others rest'; the Christian
795 reply is, 'We are orphans and must work to satisfy our needs.' Christians
184 are for ever planning new schemes and trying new methods; even their women-folk take in washing and, despite the church's discouragement, occasionally seek work in the towns. Christian men eagerly take to making irrigated gardens, and some become transport riders or itinerant hawkers; while it is Christian women who hire out their services to neighbours and make a business of pottery. It is chiefly among Christians that salt, meat, and cash take the place of beer in the work party. The total result is not merely a better economic sense, but also a growth of the spirit of competition and calculation; not merely greater industry and less improvidence, but also exploitation of their fellow tribesmen and self-seeking; and, instead of relying upon the roundabout reciprocities, Christians demand more immediate satisfactions and more precise and personal rewards. Aggressiveness and display, rivalries and suspicion, develop side by side with ideas of progress and a desire for advancement.

177 There are often fierce jealousies in the Christian settlements, and the
795 tensions occasionally set into motion waves of accusations of witchcraft
184 which break up the settlements. The classical example quoted as evidence
578 of the great incidence of witchcraft among Christians is the disruption of
754 the station at Moila. No one could be trusted, and witches were said to administer medicines to children, taking them out at night to crack their skulls upon the rocks. Christian boys are said to gossip more about witches than do their pagan brothers, and nowhere except in Christian settlements were we warned against accepting food from strangers. Witchcraft among Christians is difficult to observe, as it is driven underground; Christians do not publicly appeal to the smeller-out or seek the diviner to discover the cause of death, but they secretly consult the bones and slander the enemies that are thought to have sent the death. They tend to combat witchcraft, not by open accusation, but by privately 'sending back' the evil; and they firmly believe that the queen makes rain, albeit through the grace of the Christian God. The pollution that prevents rain is ascribed to sin—especially incest, rape, adultery, sexual offences, murder, and witchcraft—rather than to wrong burials. Tensions in the Christian settlements and the suspicion of espionage increase secretiveness about personal business, fields, and crops; but Christians are far more communicative than pagans about tribal matters and custom.

Amid conflicting tendencies, we find it difficult to say whether witchcraft is more prevalent among Christians than among pagans. The new outlook upon the nature of man and of his purposes increases tensions and rivalries, but also calls into question the assumptions of magic and witchcraft; and proscription leads to more underground activity and the development of new techniques, but also drives out of the field the visible reminders of the world of supernatural forces. In our opinion, the total situation may be summed up in the words of a Christian informant who has maintained intact his tribal background: 'Education gives men the power of witchcraft, and when we all are educated we shall all be witches, but, like Europeans, quite harmless to one another.'

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to kill us by poisoning and starving us, because they dislike hearing the groaning of a sick man. They will not allow us to go into the sun when we are getting well. The nurses ill-treat us if we do what we think is right. We get no filling food and our only enjoyment, conversation with one another, is repressed by the command to "shut up".' So profound is the suspicion, that one of our good friends died rather than go to hospital, while another, who had sustained a compound fracture, was persuaded to accept our advice to be taken to a European doctor only at the very last moment.

Yet let us not forget that in 1939 a tribal 'Cabinet' was set up and one of its 'ministers' was the guardian of health. His last message to us was that, in accordance with a decision of the 'Cabinet', he 'was watching the diet of the capital and had decided upon strictly prohibiting the running about of fowls'. By old and still persisting custom, it should be mentioned, fowls are not allowed in the capital, because, it is said, they are dirty animals.

Western culture hardly undermines magic and witchcraft: police boys use magic to ward off 'the spears of their enemies', guns are 'doctored' to make them shoot straight and even the inadequacies of European justice are compensated by magic (*hu mikila*). In this respect the culture has met the challenge, however inappropriately from our point of view. But it has failed to handle successfully the spirit of modern inquiry found among those who have been to school or have been stimulated by their experiences in the towns. Young men do not understand the long process of growing into a culture and ask questions which the old men cannot or will not answer. These young men, who judge by the standards of the little learning which is a dangerous thing, tend to despise what is not made intelligible to them. In their eyes, for instance, the mysteries of the *digoma* and the *vhidjoni* are shams, and the fact that no knowledge is imparted in the circumcision 'schools' condemns them as nonsense. This attitude and the inadequate response to it lead to lack of respect both for traditional values and old people. But the total effect is minimized by the reassertion of the old values as the young men grow older and begin to become part of and have a stake in the culture. Moreover, inquisitiveness is stamped as the immaturity, almost imbecility, of youth, and the insinuation that the doubts are due to the white man's insidious influence goes far to repress them as unworthy and disloyal.

In this book we have described Lovedu culture as it is to-day, touching but cursorily in the present chapter upon the changes that have occurred or the trends that are apparent in some groups of people. We have seen that the interpenetration in the pre-European period has effected far greater institutional changes than in the European period. Even the incorporation of the cult of spirit possession, which came twenty years after the European, represents a far greater direct evolution than the changes in forms brought about by the Christian religion. The feature of pre-European merging has been incorporation, with modifications, of culture elements and the reciprocal effect upon existing institutions and culture elements. The feature of European penetration, except in material

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which he acts in a strange manner, hears voices calling him and often runs amok, the Sotho bone-thrower learns his art in the same quiet manner as any other craft and completes his training not by any public ceremonial but by a private strengthening consisting of drinking water in which the bones have been cooked together with the blood of a cock to make him wakeful and clever. There is no objection to people practising their profession long before they have completed their training, so that doctors range from the novice to the renowned diviner of long standing. The profession, though open to all, is usually inherited from a relative; but there is an increasing number of men to-day who become doctors for the money they make out of it and without undergoing any extensive training.

The doctor associated with the new cult of possession that has within the past thirty years spread over the Lowveld from the east resembles in his methods the Zulu-Xhosa doctor. He is possessed by spirits who talk through him and order him to throw bones and guide him in the use of medicines, and he uses all manner of wonderful tricks. But he undergoes no initiation other than that of all possessed people. The cult is confined largely to women who, during possession, speak in a foreign tongue, said to be Thobolo or Kgalaka, but in reality a kind of gibberish. Possession takes the form of dancing to the accompaniment of tambourines, rattles and a special kind of drum beat, initiation into which is believed to cure the ailment which accompanied the first manifestations of the possessing spirit. These spirits are always those of relatives, usually on the mother's side, in contrast to the foreign spirits who are thought to possess Shangana-Tongas who have the same cult. Only a few of those who are possessed ever become doctors and then only when the possessing spirit was a doctor. They are the only class of Sotho doctor who receives inspiration direct from the spirits.

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A class of doctor that does not belong to the Sotho culture yet is indispensable to Lowveld Sotho society, who is seldom or never a Sotho yet has a place in Sotho life, is the *nuisane* or Shangana-Tonga smeller-out. He divines chiefly by the head without much use of bones, is able to find things that have been hidden, and is the final judge or smeller-out of witches.

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The doctor is not, in the minds of most people, clearly distinguished

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om the witch: it is generally argued that he who knows how to 791
ounteract wizards must himself be one, and Lowveld doctors are 754
nown to 'try' one another by sending lightning or familiars to their
vals to test their powers. Doctors have been openly accused of
itchcraft. This confusion is, however, in no way detrimental to the
actice of great doctors since not only is a doctor unlikely to work
gainst a client when it is in the interest of his practice to please, but
there must always be a motive in evil-doing, witchcraft without
ention being impossible, doctors harm only their enemies.

Day and Night Wizards. The term *mulai*, wizard, is in the Low- 754
ld equivalent to 'criminal' and implies evil intention, desire to kill 789
hers. In contrast to the Shangana-Tongs, there is thought to be no
ch thing as unintentional witchcraft. The wizard knows he is a
izard and harms others because he bears towards them feelings of
vy or malice. The methods employed in witchcraft do not differ
om those of good magic; the distinction between the two lies in the
il motives, injurious to social life, which lie behind witchcraft.
nce use of magic on one's possessions to hurt the fingers of who-
er tries to steal them or sending animals to frighten a deserting wife
o returning home is not witchcraft, though the technique is
ntical with that of the witch, because designed not to kill or injure
iously but to uphold the social order.

All tribes in the Lobedu culture area have a technical distinction 754
tween two classes of wizards—the night wizard (*mulai ea busiu*) and
day wizard (*mulai ea matsuru*). The night wizard, usually but not
clusively a woman, inherits his evil powers from his mother who
ches him the art in early infancy. His methods are direct: by going
mself or sending familiars, various animals such as the stoat and
dubwew (human beings whom he has killed and enslaved), he
rks his harm. He works mostly at night, and there exists a sort of
iety of wizards who dance together at night and recognize one
other by day. The day wizard, on the other hand, does not neces-
ily come of a stock of wizards. Any one who uses medicine to
ison or kill is a day wizard. Sending lightning, using people's foot-
ns or pointing at them to harm them, poisoning food and beer,
se are the methods of the day wizard in whose work the 'spell',

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i.e., telling the medicine, without any set phraseology, what to do, is important. Day wizards are chiefly men and it is said that, owing to the facility of obtaining bad medicine in towns and from foreign tribes to-day, this type of witchcraft has greatly increased.

In everyday life, however, a person is called a witch, whatever methods he has used, and in an accusation of witchcraft there is never any discussion whether the culprit is a day or night wizard. Moreover, there is in the minds of ordinary people considerable confusion about the type of witchcraft associated with each class, and it is possible to live among Lowveld people a long time without coming upon these distinctions. The night wizard is thus in Evans-Pritchard's terminology the witch, the day wizard the sorcerer; and the great distinction between sorcery and legitimate magic lies not in method but in intention.

SOCIAL IMPORTANCE OF BEER AND THE DANCE. It would be a mistake in discussing the main features of Lowveld society to leave out of count the social importance of beer and the use of the dance or *goha* as a social institution, though neither is confined to these tribes. Beer, apart from its religious value, plays a part in social and economic life. It is continually being carried from one group to another, acting as a bond between people and establishing friendly relations. In the Lowveld, in contrast to the Highveld, it is still of greater importance than money; while people may refuse to attend working parties for money, they will flock to one where beer is served. The *goha* is a dance in which women do the drumming while men playing reed pipes dance in a circle round the drums. It is, however, much more than a dance. It is an institution for maintaining friendship and reciprocity between groups, a way of showing sympathy on the death of a relative and the means by which subjects approach their chief for rain in time of drought. A *goha* is often sent by one chief to another in the Northern Transvaal.

SOME COMPARISONS BETWEEN LOBEDU CULTURE AND THAT OF OTHER AREAS. The Lobedu culture complex represents a close blending of two cultures, that of the Lobedu who came south from somewhere in Rhodesia when the empire of Monomotapa was breaking up, bringing

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789 from the supernatural. While anyone who knows a cure for an ailment
755 is manipulating the forces of nature and using *vuʃaga*, there are doctors who, by virtue of long training, know many medicines, have learnt how to divine and have been imbued with additional perspicacity and powers as a result of a special initiation. Medicine functions by virtue of the properties, actual or ascribed, of matter; the principles underlying the operation of medicines assume mechanical cause and effect and even the divining bones are read according to rule.

756 There are, however, two types of doctor who fall into a different category: the *lelopo* doctor, directly possessed and guided by an ancestor spirit, who largely confines his activities to curing possessed people, and the *mugome* or 'smeller-out' who is generally a foreigner. People using the forces of nature for evil purposes are *valoi* (witches and sorcerers) and are dealt with in another context. *Uvuʃaga*, it will be seen, is the use of impersonal power inherent in matter, which is extracted by the expert (*ʃaga*) and applied in the interests of the health and well-being of men; it is also the exercise of personal qualities or skills, either inherited or acquired through spirit possession or guidance.

Ancestors

769 Ancestors can influence for good and evil the fortunes only of their own
777 descendants, who in the case of the chief's ancestors are taken to include the whole tribe. Their control over the forces of nature is not explicitly formulated; and what is expressly stated is not always confirmed in Lovedu religious practices. The ancestors are clearly conceived to exercise an overall control. A man will always assert that no harm or illness can befall him if his ancestors are watchful enough, for they have power to ward off all evil
● [754] and misfortune. It is said that even witches cannot, without the will of the ancestors, enter a village or deliver the last fatal blow that kills a man. But in practice the will of the ancestors either is not interposed, for no ascertainable reason, or is ineffective to ward off attacks. If some great sorrow overtakes a man, it is said that 'his ancestors have had an accident' implying that he has been temporarily deprived of their protection and is at the mercy of his
[755] enemies. Even medicines are said to be ineffective without the co-operation of one's ancestors, the conception being not merely that their goodwill is essential but also that *uvuʃaga* belongs to the ancestors. In fact, however, the ineffectiveness of medicines is never in any concrete case attributed to the lack of such co-operation.

769 Ancestors are appealed to and thanked for good crops, fertility, plenty,
777 and all manner of good fortune and success. The desire to be remembered and given tendance is attributed to them, and they may themselves cause
753 harm and sickness to descendants who neglect them; but somewhat inconsistently a man may with impunity neglect them for many years and give them tendance only when misfortune overtakes him. Ancestors may be approached and propitiated or thanked by means of offerings and prayer

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cooled with rain-medicine. The polluted corpse (called *pukudi*, the opposite of *fuga*) is thought of as thrusting up an arm and waving it about to disperse the rain.

It is the duty of the queen each year to *thea* or 'establish' the season propitiously for her people. Certain district heads who are close relatives of the queen have rainpots which they revitalize every year with medicine from the queen and stir them up at the queen's command to ensure a propitious season. In the old days the year was 'established' also by the beating of the sacred drums (*gwama*) and a visit to the royal ancestor graves, but this has fallen into disuse.

If there is drought or if the rain does not come at its appropriate time, people say the queen has not changed the year properly and steps are taken to approach her. Royal relatives may approach her personally or complain in her hearing that she is killing her people by withholding rain; district heads may formally pay homage (*ku lova*) with gifts of £1 or a head of cattle, or may bring a troupe of dancers to please her and invoke her pity at the spectacle of people dancing when they should be hoeing. The songs (*lenga*) are associated with offerings to the ancestors and with rain. If these efforts are of no avail diviners are consulted to determine the cause of drought—the rain-charms may have been 'weakened' or evil practices of witches may have prevented rain. In 1937 the people were told at a tribal gathering to report lightning 'sent' by witches, and shortly afterwards, when lightning had struck a tree near a village, boys were sent to sprinkle every house in the area with *mafugo* to 'cool' the lightning. Witches may also disperse rain by hanging up medicated branches which sway in the air. If it is an ancestor that is 'holding the queen's hands' he or she has to be propitiated by the sacrifice of a black beast or sheep on the grave.

When winds frustrate the efforts of the queen to make rain, especially when a gale disperses suspicious black clouds, people come to condole with her as if she had lost a relative, and it is taboo to work in the fields the next day, just as it is on the day after the first rain of the season and on certain other occasions.

The queen is 'Transformer of the Clouds', the changer of the seasons, and guarantor of their cyclic regularity, but she can exercise her powers suspiciously only in certain conditions and in 'agreement with the ancestors'.

Digwa

The fourth category of forces by which nature is regulated in the interests of man consists of *digwa* which are associated more especially with changes in the status of man. A *gwa* is primarily a drum, but as an abstract concept it is particularly identified with the power concentrated in the drum cult. This cult includes the large complex of institutions connected with rites of transition, of which the year-long *vyali-vukwara* (fertility cult) is one. A *gwa* is thought of as something mystical and secret, awesome and esoteric. The circumcision 'school' for boys is called a *gwa* which is said to 'bite'

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An omen or bane (*lesoka*) presages death or disaster, but it may itself be the cause of the evil that follows. An owl hooting outside a hut, cats crying plaintively (not caterwauling) at night, presage disaster, for cats have uncanny insight; a mountain snake can be a *lesoka*, and so can a *leshoge*, i.e. a person whose teeth have appeared in the wrong order. A person will *yola* another, i.e. cause misfortune or death to descend upon a member of the latter's family, by swearing badly at him, especially if the words are out of all proportion to the offence or provocation.

These concepts of natural luck, accident, and omens are thus also linked with human relationships. Good relations with near relatives may bring you good luck, bad relations, especially with your father or father's sister, bad luck or illness to your children. In fact any man who despises the great, particularly his father, will, it is said, see him in the bones as the cause of his misfortune, especially if the old man dies before a reconciliation has been effected. An old man's scolding or curse is an omen (*rumola*) which portends and causes misfortune to a near relative of the person scolded, and the grievance of one's sister or father's sister, even if it is unconscious, generates a force (*mahoro*) which brings illness upon one's children and which can be neutralized only by a religious rite. The exact relation between *mahoro* and the ancestors is not very clear. The Lovedu conceive *mahoro* as following automatically from the bad relationship between important kin. Yet reconciliation, which removes the source of the *mahoro*, is not enough for putting matters right. It is the ancestors that must remove the illness at the request of the aggrieved party.

Witchcraft and Sorcery (Uzila)

The evils that have so far been mentioned are either inherent in nature or only vaguely brought into relation with the conduct and relationships between men. Their effects except in a few cases are mild, rarely ending in death. In a completely different category is the greatest and most devastating source of evil *vuzila* (witchcraft and sorcery), brought about directly by man. *Uzila* is, by Lovedu conceptions, always due to the conscious, evil practices of man and is directed at persons he has reason to hate.[1] *Uzila* is morally reprehensible, and witches and sorcerers are the arch enemies of society. The concept of *vuzila* explains evil in terms of the malicious wickedness in men's hearts; it is criminality incarnate in man. The term *vuzila* covers both witchcraft and sorcery; nevertheless the Lovedu make a clear distinction between witchcraft (*vuzila vya vusiku*—night witchcraft) and sorcery (*vuzila vya matsiaru*—day witchcraft). The night-witch uses sinister inherited powers which extend beyond the ordinary course of nature. The sorcerer uses the natural, known powers of medicine for anti-social ends. Witchcraft implies possession of power to do evil transcending the under-

[1] Neighbouring Venda and Tsonga conceive the witch as constrained to evil by heredity but unconscious of his own evil acts.

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754 standing of ordinary men; sorcery is the manipulation of lawful means for unlawful ends.

The night-witch belongs to an unholy fraternity whose members meet at night to dance to their drums and deliberate upon their deeds of darkness. She uses no medium of destruction and no medicine or spells, but has inborn powers to do what is physically impossible to ordinary men. She goes herself on her nefarious errands or uses familiars. Witches are almost invariably women, partly no doubt because it is difficult to conceive of women having the facilities to purchase medicines for purposes of sorcery, partly also because they are endowed with more mysterious powers than men. The sorcerer, usually a man, whose machinations involve the use of medicines and spells, is a day-witch because his power is derived from ordinary natural techniques 'of the day'. The essence of sorcery is the criminal use of the potency of medicines which can be, and usually are, used in the service of legitimate ends.

754 Many medicines are specifically good or bad and their use cannot traverse their intrinsic nature; but some of the most important are good and hence 678 moral, or bad and hence immoral according as they are used for socially approved or socially disapproved ends. *Madabi*, for example, has the power to transmute the nature of things. It is right for a husband to manipulate *madabi* in a way that will cause wild animals to appear while his runaway spouse works for her lover, for in this way he may frighten her into returning to him. But a jilted lover who takes revenge upon a girl is guilty of sorcery if he uses *madabi* to change her sex when her child is about to be born and thereby endangers her life. Such an act is unlawful vengeance, which is sharply distinguished from lawful restitution; it reflects a desire to injure another for personal motives which are not in harmony with approved social values.

759 Witchcraft and sorcery can always be counteracted. A favourite method 761 of dealing with a witch is the use of reprisal magic whereby the evil is sent back to him, but there are many charms and medicines, all relying on the power of *tuyaga*, by means of which witchcraft can be combated or rendered harmless. Villages are protected against witches and sorcerers by charms circling the village or placed at strategic points, while the witch within the village is treated by *ku fera*, i.e. a drug is introduced into his food which has the power of making him forget his frustration and seek compensation in day-dreaming and doddering. After witchcraft or sorcery has been established by divination as the cause of an evil, and the culprit has been identified (the diviner mentions no name but gives certain attributes, such as sex, clan, locality), it is open to the victim to make an accusation and risk the legal proceedings that will inevitably follow. But resort to law is not entirely satisfactory since appeasement, not the hardening of animosities that accusations occasion, is the function of law. Moreover, the initiation of legal sanctions against a witch may spur him to greater activity.

777 Witch beliefs reflect the Lovedu notion that almost all the misfortunes

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that befall men, whether sickness, barrenness, lightning that strikes men, huts, or cattle, failure of an individual's crops, or death of his children, are caused by the hatred and envy in men's hearts.

There is no greater fear than the fear that gnaws at the heart of a Lovedu who suspects he has been bewitched. Yet he is not impotent before its onslaught. By ascribing destructive forces, disease, and other evil to witchcraft and sorcery, and at the same time believing in the power of magic (*rupapo*) to counteract witchcraft, a Lovedu is able to feel that he is master of his own fate. Evil in the world on this theory becomes intelligible, not arbitrary and capricious. This is an ordered and just world in which evil, being held to express itself largely in witchcraft and sorcery, is outlawed and criminal, and in which good ultimately triumphs. And if this projective system affords a convenient theory of failure, it also stresses the virtue of goodwill for human welfare.

Relationships of Man to Man

That the greatest source of all evil should be the envy and jealousies in men's hearts is in keeping with the emphasis everywhere in Lovedu social life on the importance of good relationships between man and man. Bad relations and non-fulfilment of obligations between kin may, as we have seen, cause not only bad luck, through ancestral displeasure, but even illness, through the automatic force of *mahoro*. The dissatisfaction in a mother's heart, whether conscious or not, in connexion with her daughter's marriage may cause her sterility, just as the complaints of a sister may be the cause, as seen in the babies, of the illness of her brother's children. The queen's emotions, too, affect the rain and it becomes important, therefore, for the welfare of all that she should not be sad or displeased.

Dominating relations between individuals and between groups in the whole pattern of mutuality, co-operation, and long-run reciprocities in the social structure. 'One leg cannot dance a *goma*' say the Lovedu; co-operation is essential for the tasks of life. Security is bound up with the mutualities of kin, cognatic, agnatic, and affinal. In a society where wealth cannot be accumulated, it is not surprising that men's efforts should be directed towards building up and maintaining through generations links of marriage and kinship with all that these imply. These reciprocities in the society are motivated by unavoidable necessity but they are long-run ones. There is no weighing up of one service against another, nor any attempt to seek prestige by lavishness. Moreover, it is sharing and helpfulness not the display of one's generosity that is wanted.

Side by side with the emphasis on give and take, the society provides in such a manner for the place and achievement of individuals that competitiveness is limited and aggressive traits are outlawed. The immediate goals of individuals are divergent, and men are not conceived as striving against one another for the attainment of the same end. There is no special prestige

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side, not to the Sekhobo side. The lineage head's father's mother had been a 'wife' and close relative of the queen, a connection which the Sekhobo family tended to stress socially and which was reflected also in their religion (they had a cow dedicated to and representing her).

The Lobedu lineage, in fact, does not operate as a group to the exclusion of other kin except in informal consultations on matters of marriage or litigation; and the lineage does not emerge in everyday activities as a clearly marked unit. A *mukhelo* such as the above is one of two or three rare occasions when the lineage comes together and in every one of these cases both sons and daughters and their children are invited to be present.

Lobedu homesteads vary in size and composition from a typical minimum of a married man with his mother, wife and children to a group of half-brothers, their mothers, wives, children and grandchildren, still living together after the death of the father. Very often other relatives, such as a widowed sister and her children, a maternal relative or an affine of the head are to be found living in the homestead. But these are the least stable elements and tend to move away in a short time. Though small units continuously hive off, and there is a good deal of change in the small homesteads of more recent immigrants or where a migrant labourer husband has never returned, the Lobedu homestead is on the whole, especially in the case of the chief son and his descendants, a remarkably stable unit. Over a period of thirty years most of the larger homesteads known to me have remained in the same place or been rebuilt a few hundred yards from the old site after the death of their head.

Economy of the Lobedu and their attitude to property

The economy of the Lobedu is a subsistence one based mainly on agriculture and stock-raising supplemented by migrant labour in European areas. Land for cultivation is allotted to individuals by the district head. Once allocated, fields are inherited in the male line and cannot be taken away so long as they are in effective use. Only if a man moves away from the district or is chased out as a witch can he and his family lose

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absence of their menfolk at labour centres, reported everything that took place to B. Later C moved away from his uterine brother B and in 1961 there were three separate homesteads.

The cleavage in a homestead then is on 'house' lines, though uterine brothers living together after the death of their father also eventually separate. The break may be the result of an accusation of witchcraft or there may be an amicable separation as in the case described above. Reasons for separating vary: Batamedi moved away from his uterine brother, a district headman, to satisfy political ambitions—he hoped to be made headman of an area to which his family had an ancient claim; Poke, a married man, left the homestead of his brother with his mother and siblings for health reasons, suspecting that someone in the homestead might be bewitching him and hoping that a change would improve his condition. After many years in a different district, he returned to live in the original homestead. Sons do not move away before the death of their father unless there has been a quarrel in which their mothers are involved, or unless they become Christians and marry Christian girls. Even the death of the father does not necessarily bring about the separation of his sons; brothers and half-brothers may live together for years. As they marry more wives the size of the families increases, the homestead becomes more congested, the likelihood of quarrels greater and gradually the 'houses' move asunder. If half-brothers and brothers have not separated before, then the final break-up of the old homestead will come with the death of the eldest brother. For it is rare for a man to live under a young heir of the generation below him. Close religious and social ties, however, persist long after separation. Half-brothers continue to 'inherit' each other's wives and there may be a good deal of co-operation in work-parties and much consultation in family affairs. Lobedu homesteads are stable over long periods and there is a great value attached to remaining together.

Preferential Marriage down the Generations

The development of the 'houses' in a homestead, leading to the gradual segmentation of the domestic group and separation of